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AN
ESSAY
ON
THE IDENTITY
AND
GENERAL RESURRECTION
OF THE
HUMAN BODY;
IN WHICH
THE EVIDENCES
IN FAVOUR OF THESE IMPORTANT SUBJECTS
ARE CONSIDERED,

IN
Relation both to Philosophy and Scripture.

BY SAMUEL DREW,

1765-1833

AUTHOR OF AN ESSAY ON THE IMMATERIALITY AND IMMORTALITY
OF THE HUMAN SOUL.

"Why should it be thought with you a thing incredible that GOD should raise
the dead?" St. Paul. Acts xxvi. 8.

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AN
ESSAY
ON
THE
GENERAL INFLUENCE

HUMAN BODY;

OF WHICH
THE EVIDENCES

IN FAVOUR OF THREE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES
ARE CONSIDERED.

SECTION FIRST. OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE
HUMAN BODY.

BY
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OF THE
FACULTY OF THE
MEDICAL DEPARTMENT
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

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TO

THE READER.

WHEN a Book on an abstruse and important subject is offered to the world, the situation of its Author, if in humble life, rarely fails to excite attention. Under these circumstances, it is much easier for him to awaken curiosity, than to gratify it. But it is always in his power to satisfy the reasonable inquiries of those, who feel solicitous to know something of the person who thus publicly introduces himself to their notice.

Curiosity is natural to the mind of man; and, when confined within proper limits, it has a beneficial tendency. It seeks, indeed, for gratification from various quarters; but it is not very fastidious whence or how it is obtained. It generally fixes upon extremes; upon the great, and upon the little;—and, as it respects authors, upon the giants, and upon the dwarfs in literary pretensions. On these accounts, it is not necessarily a flattering compliment to become the object of its pursuit.

The life and studies of the *learned* author, whom a liberal education—uninterrupted leisure—and acknowledged abilities, have raised to the chair of science, and invested with a degree of authority to impart instruction, are subjects well deserving the attention of the biographer. But curiosity frequently wishes to know something also concerning those who, in humble life, have been brought up in no school but that of nature ; and who, in opposition to difficulties and discouragements, come forward and offer to the world, the fruits of their labour in the field of literature. It is a region in which they seem to be intruders, and where they professedly undertake investigations, which their confined means of knowledge, and unpromising powers, appear inadequate to perform.

Metaphysical researches are so far removed from manual labour and humble life, that many have expressed their surprise that they should ever have been united. Hence, as it respects myself, the question has repeatedly been asked,—“ What circumstances led to so unlikely an association ? ” The replies which this question naturally produced, induced several of my friends, in whose judgments I feel a strong confidence, and to whose good offices I stand indebted, to communicate their opinions, that it would afford

some gratification to a great number of those, whose names are affixed to this work, if I would trace those incidents of my life, which gradually led to such an unlooked for event.

When their wishes were first expressed, I shrunk back from the suggestion, not only through an apprehension that I should incur the charge of vanity; but, especially, as on a review of my life, I saw nothing remarkable which was worthy of record. On this ground, I declined to comply with their desires. The renewed solicitations of these friends, soon, however, assumed the shape and tone of a request. And, consistently with that debt of gratitude which I owed them, I found it impossible to withhold a compliance without subjecting myself to the charge of being influenced by a passion nearly allied to that vanity, the imputation of which I dreaded to incur. This circumstance inclined me to alter my prior resolution.

In thus submitting to their importunities, I am furnished with an opportunity of apologizing for those imperfections, which, without doubt are included in my work; and of placing the disinterestedness and generosity of my Subscribers in a conspicuous light, by briefly declaring to the world on whom it has been bestowed. The little narrative may probably afford some encouragement to

others ; who, poor and unknown, may at this moment be struggling with adversity, and attempting to emerge from obscurity. It will add another example to many, which may be adduced, and thereby assure them, that in this comparatively happy country, poverty and the want of education, are no obstacles to patronage and support. On one account I gladly embrace the occasion which is now afforded me. It is that of recording the obligations which I owe to a man of eminent character and abilities, who is now no more, but whose memory I hope, I shall never cease to respect and revere.

By this plain statement, I feel a hope that I shall secure myself from the censures of the candid and liberal-minded ; they will enter into my views, and place a proper estimate on my motives. With the envious and the malevolent, I cannot expect the same success. For I no more flatter myself with the thought that I can escape their detraction, than with the expectation that I can cure them of those passions, which must give greater pain to such as cherish them, than it is in their power to inflict on others. My narrative which follows, is little more than the simple monotony of humble life. But on these accounts,

“ Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
“ Their humble joys and destiny obscure,
“ Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
“ The short and simple annals of the poor.”

I was born in the parish of St. Austell, in the county of Cornwall, on the third day of March, 1765. My father, who was a labouring man, supported his family, which consisted of a wife and four children, in creditable poverty, by dint of application, industry, and frugality. But though neither of my parents was ignorant of the importance of education, such were their circumstances that it was not in their power to afford me any, except that which acquired at a little reading-school, in which I merely learned the knowledge of my letters. Here my education ended, for to a writing-school I never was promoted.

At the age of seven, I was obliged to go to work, and for my labour, my parents received twopence per day. The next year I had the misfortune to lose my mother, and many a time since—

This throbbing breast has heav'd the heartfelt sigh,
And breath'd afflictions where her ashes lie.

Soon after this, my father removed into another neighbourhood; and at the age of ten years and a half, I was bound an apprentice to a shoemaker, in the parish of St. Blazey.

Prior to this time I acquired some know-

ledge of writing, but it amounted to little more than merely to know how to make the letters of the alphabet, and to write my name. And this knowledge, scanty as it was, I nearly lost during my apprenticeship ; but towards the latter years of the term, I made some progress in my reading. This I attribute chiefly to the opportunity which I then had of perusing the *Weekly Entertainer*, published by Messrs. Goadby and Co. of Sherborne. In these miscellanies, such narratives as were affecting, and such anecdotes as were pointed, were the principal objects which attracted my notice. And among these, nothing excited my attention, so much as the adventures, vicissitudes, and disasters, to which the American war gave rise.

On quitting my master, I procured employment in the vicinity of Plymouth. Here, the necessity of earning my own livelihood engrossed all my attention ; so that the same cause which removed me from perusing the *Weekly Miscellany*, nearly quenched all my desires after further knowledge. After labouring in this neighbourhood about four years, I returned to St. Austell, to which place I was attracted by the advance of wages. In this town it was my lot to conduct the shoemaking business for a man who is now in America : he was an eccentric

character, but by no means destitute of understanding. His original occupation was that of a sadler, and through his own application he had obtained some knowledge of bookbinding. To these employments he superadded the manufacture of shoes, and in one shop carried on these three trades together.

In this situation, I found myself surrounded by books of various descriptions, and felt my taste for the acquirement of information return with renewed vigour, and increase in proportion to the means of indulgence, which were now placed fully within my reach. But here some new difficulties occurred, with which I found it painful to grapple. My knowledge of the import of words was as contracted, as my ideas were scanty; so that I found it necessary to keep a dictionary continually by my side whilst I was reading, to which I was compelled constantly to refer. This was a tedious process. But in a little time the difficulty wore away, and my horizon of knowledge became enlarged.

Among other books which were brought to be bound, it happened that Mr. Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding made its appearance. This was a work of which I had never heard. I occasionally opened

the volumes, and read a few pages, but rather with amazement than satisfaction ; and from that moment began to reflect on the intellectual powers of man. In doing this, I could not but draw a contrast between my own mental condition and that of others. This awakened me from my stupor, and induced me to form a resolution to abandon the grovelling views which I had been accustomed to entertain of things, and to quit the practices of my old associates.

Soon after this, I engaged in business for myself, when the pressure of trade, and pecuniary embarrassments, retarded my progress in mental acquirements, but stimulated my endeavours to emerge from ignorance. By unremitting industry, I at length surmounted such obstacles as were of a pecuniary nature : this enabled me to procure assistance in my labours, and afforded me the common relaxation which others enjoyed. This was the only leisure at which I aimed. In this situation, I felt an internal vigour prompting me to exertions, but I was unable to determine what direction I should take. The sciences lay before me. I discovered charms in each, but I was unable to embrace them all, and hesitated in making a selection. I had learned that

“ One science only would one genius fit,

“ So vast is art, so narrow human wit.”

At first I felt such an attachment to astronomy, that I resolved to confine my views to the study of that science; but I soon found myself too defective in arithmetic to make any proficiency. Modern history was my next object; but I quickly discovered that more books and time were necessary than I could possibly either afford or spare, and on this account history was abandoned. In the region of metaphysics I saw neither of the above impediments. It nevertheless appeared to be a thorny path, but I determined to enter, and accordingly began to tread it.

During several years, all my leisure hours were devoted to reading; but I do not recollect that it ever interrupted my business, though it frequently broke in upon my rest. On my labour depended my livelihood. Literary pursuits were only my amusement. Common prudence had taught me the lesson which the following sentences so happily convey. “Secure to yourself a livelihood independently of literary successes, and put into this lottery only the overplus of time. Woe to him who depends wholly on his pen; nothing is more casual. The man who makes shoes is sure of his wages, the man who writes a book is never sure of any thing.”—*Marmontel*.

Nothing, however, amidst the various subjects which engrossed my thoughts could be more remote from my views and intentions than that of commencing author. But this improbable event was occasioned by the following incident. When Mr. Thomas Payne published his "Age of Reason," it unhappily made too many converts. Among these was a young gentleman of good natural talents which had been improved by a liberal education, who frequently visited my shop. He inquired one day, whether I had ever seen this pamphlet? and on finding that I had not, he put it into my hands on condition that I should read it through, and finally give him my opinion on the doctrines which it inculcated. This I promised to do; and occasionally wrote down such remarks as occurred during my reading of the work, and such as I could recollect to have made in the numerous conversations with him to which this incident gave rise. The young man is now in eternity. But I am happy to state, that, prior to his illness, he acknowledged that the design which he had in view in putting the "Age of Reason" into my hands, was to proselyte me to its principles; but that having failed in producing that effect, he had been induced first to suspect their validity, and then to abandon them altogether. These

“Remarks on the Age of Reason,” I revised as well as I was able, and afterwards, with some additions, published them to the world in 1799. This was done with a design that the “Remarks might produce in others, effects similar to those which had already resulted from them.”

It was this pamphlet which first excited the notice of my greatly respected and much lamented friend, the late Rev. John Whitaker, who, from principles of benevolence, rather than a discovery of merit, was pleased to recommend it to the notice of the Antijacobin Review. In this literary journal, the reviewers permitted the laudableness of the attempt to outweigh the imperfections of the performance, and spoke of it in terms which have made me their debtor. I shall be happy if the present work pass with safety, through the ordeal of liberal and candid criticism.

In the two following years, I published three or four pamphlets, but these being on local and controversial subjects, disappeared with the occasions which gave them birth. In 1802, I published “An Essay on the Immateriality and Immortality of the Human Soul,” the occasions of which I have briefly hinted in the following preface. The approbation with which it has been countenanced, has in some measure stimulated me to under-

take and accomplish the present work. And probably the manner in which this will be received, will not be without its influence on my future labours.

On a perusal of this plain and unvarnished tale, it must be obvious to all, that I stand indebted to Mr. Whitaker for my literary existence, by his publicly avowing himself my friend, at a moment when recommendation, or a want of it, must have finally determined my fate. I was then in a critical situation, insomuch that a single dash of his pen might have doomed me to perpetual silence and obscurity, and made me feel an aversion from those studies in which before I had so ardently delighted. Such are the incidents on which the destinies of life depend! Fortunately my probationary pamphlet fell into the hands of a gentleman, whose exalted rank in the literary world, raised him above popular prejudices, and enabled him to silence the language of contempt, where it could not otherwise influence public opinion. He is now placed beyond the reach of censure and applause, and I rejoice in having an opportunity of expressing my gratitude, by offering this tribute to his memory without fearing to incur the imputation of flattery.

Next to Mr. Whitaker, I feel myself much indebted to several gentlemen, who have ren-

dered me some assistance, by giving me free access to their libraries. Those to whom I allude, have treated me with a degree of respect to which the merits of my works can bear only an inadequate proportion. I acknowledge the obligations which their kindnesses have laid me under, and should feel much pleasure in mentioning their names, but I do not know that it would be agreeable, and without being assured of this, it is a liberty which I dare not take. To many of those from whom I have received tokens of approbation I am personally unknown, their acts of kindness are therefore enhanced by the manner in which they have been communicated. I do not know that they estimate their favours so highly, but I should reproach myself with ingratitude, were I to omit this tribute of acknowledgment.

It has been a hackneyed topic with authors to censure the ingratitude of the age in which they live. I do not pretend to estimate either the propriety or the impropriety of the charge as it respects others, but experience has taught me a different lesson. I have found more reason to be grateful for support than to complain of the want of it; and I shall be extremely glad to find that I have given to my numerous Subscribers no

occasion to wish that they had withholden what they have now bestowed.

To those Ladies and Gentlemen, whose names honour and recommend my work, I hold myself under peculiar obligations, for enabling me to send this volume into the world. It gives me sensible pleasure to behold in the list of my subscribers the names of a considerable number of persons who patronized my former production. I hope this will afford them equal, if not superior satisfaction.

For the patronage which they have afforded me, I hope they will have the goodness to accept my most sincere thanks. It is not in my power to make them any other requital, than that which the perusal of the book will afford. May God accompany it with his blessing, and grant that all who read it may have their parts in the Resurrection of the just!

SAMUEL DREW.

ST. AUSTELL, *March 20, 1809.*

PREFACE.

THE science of human nature has always been deemed of such importance, as to hold an exalted rank in the estimation of mankind. Yet our various actions, when taken in connection with their causes and consequences, unfold an ample field, of which it is impossible for us to ascertain the limits: because the powers which we possess, can neither explore nor fix its boundaries. In this extensive region, our views are carried from the isthmus of time on which we stand, into that eternity from whence we date our origin, and which we contemplate as our future home. Its distant extremes are therefore lodged beyond the confines of our researches, and will, most probably, for ever, elude the comprehension of all finite minds.

A survey of our intellectual and corporeal powers will, nevertheless, enable us partially to draw aside the curtain which contracts the horizon of human knowledge, and teach us to perceive those secret bonds, which unite the visible with the invisible world. Human nature is a central point, in which theology and philosophy meet together. From the union of these, and the diversity of human

endowments, we learn that man is a connective link, who joins both matter and spirit in his compounded nature, and cements the state of existence which now is, with that which shall be hereafter. These important subjects form a considerable branch of the inquiry which occupies the following pages.

But since the work which will accompany those introductory remarks, has exceeded my primary design, by nearly one half, I have neither room nor inclination to add to its bulk by an unwieldy and inapplicable preface. Some remarks, however, are necessary to give the reader an idea of the occasion which called it into being, and of the nature and import of those arguments which are presented for his perusal.

It was early in the year 1800, that I communicated to my benevolent friend, the late Rev. John Whitaker, my intention of writing, "An Essay on the Immateriality and Immortality of the Human Soul." He inquired into my views of the subject, and having obtained some knowledge of my design, so far approved of the method which I had adopted, as to encourage me to proceed with the investigation. The manuscript of this work I submitted to his inspection, and, receiving his sanction of what I had written, published it to the world towards the close of 1802.

The favourable manner in which this publication was received, stimulated me in no small degree to

make new exertions ; while the subject itself induced me to turn my thoughts almost immediately from the *human soul* to the *human body*. I accordingly began to contemplate the possibility of adducing some rational evidence in favour of the General Resurrection. But this subject I soon found was so inseparably connected with that of personal identity, that without investigating the latter, I perceived it would be an act of folly to attempt the former. This circumstance led me to connect them together in the present inquiry.

In the complex view which the union of these subjects presented, I saw, or thought I saw, a variety of sources from which arguments might be drawn, all tending in one direction, and uniting their strength to authenticate the fact which I wished to establish. These thoughts I communicated to my friend, who pressed me with the utmost earnestness to proceed with the inquiry, whatever the issue might be. At the same time he observed, that I must navigate the ocean nearly alone, as I had no reason to expect much assistance, either from preceding or contemporary writers. This observation I have since found realized by fact. Encouraged, however, by his advice, rather than deterred by his remarks, I immediately began the work, and continued to pursue it through difficulties which were at once inseparable from the undertaking, and heightened by the disadvantages of my situation.

A train of circumstances incident to human life, occasionally retarded my progress ; so that the period of its completion baffled the calculations which I had previously made. Application, however, succeeded to interruption, and perseverance finally surmounted all.

It was about the close of the year 1803, that I had in my own estimation, completed the manuscript, and I fully expected that I should shortly submit it to the inspection of my much lamented friend. For it was a resolution which I had previously formed, that if it possessed any merit, Mr. Whitaker should have the first opportunity of making the discovery of it ; and if it had nothing that could render it worthy of preservation, he alone should witness its disgrace.

But here an unforeseen and unpleasant difficulty arose. Preparatory to his inspection of it, I proceeded to give the whole a cool and dispassionate perusal, that in one view I might take an impartial survey of the import and connection of all its parts. In prosecuting this perusal, I had the mortification to find that the arrangements I had made were bad, —that my thoughts appeared confused,—and, that in many places, the chain of argumentation had been broken by frivolous digressions, and impertinent reflections.—That in some places the arguments were defective, and in others, those which were good in themselves, were placed in an inauspicious light :

so that on the whole, I sunk down into a kind of careless apathy, half resolved to touch it no more.

The existence of the work which had thus grown to a state of unwieldy maturity, became known about this time to many of my friends, who had been taught to expect its appearance. These attributed to negligence, the delay which they perceived, without once suspecting that it originated in another cause. Awakened, however, by their importunities from that torpor into which I had sunk, I once more summoned up resolution to recommence a revisal, and proceeded with a full determination to quit it no more, till, to the utmost of my power, I had extracted order from confusion,—lopped off redundancies, supplied defects,—and placed my reasonings in a clear and unbroken light. This was not done, till sometime in August, 1806, soon after which, I submitted the manuscript to the examination of several of my most enlightened and judicious friends, and from their sanction and approbation of the work, I now commit it to the world. Such was the origin, and such have been the vicissitudes and progress of the present volume.

On the work itself as it now appears, but little can be said that will be of any avail. The author has not vanity enough to imagine that what he has written is free from defect. But whatever is submitted to the public eye, appeals to a tribunal, by the decision of which it must abide. No man, however, has a right to demand on any given occasion, a stronger degree of proof than the nature of

the subject allows, or than the evidence which is employed to support it is calculated to impart.

On a doctrine so important, so astonishing, and so abstruse as the Resurrection of the human Body, no one can doubt that difficulties of a most formidable nature have occurred. He, therefore, who expects to find in the work before him, all obstacles totally removed, and the fact substantiated by demonstrative evidence, may rest himself assured that he will be disappointed. Demonstration may perhaps be demonstrated to be unattainable in the present case. It is therefore the height of folly to look for *indubitable* certainty, when the nature of the subject points out to us the reason why it cannot be attained. The Author of our being, in his arrangements of the natural and intellectual world, has adapted the various kinds of proof to the different subjects which we are called to contemplate. He has at once erected the barriers which bound their confines, and given us to understand why their limits cannot be enlarged.

Sensitive proof can apply only to objects of sense; and demonstration is confined to such points as are brought into immediate contact with our principles of intuition. But, neither oral nor historical testimony can afford any higher evidence than *moral certainty*. This species of proof has nevertheless an undoubted claim upon our assent; though partially destitute of those essential ingredients which are necessary to create *positive* know-

ledge. Facts which are lodged in futurity, and which have never yet occurred, are incapable of being demonstrated. The data and the events are too remote from one another in their natures to be connected by this species of evidence. Historical incidents which have already taken place, are in exactly the same predicament. No man can demonstrate that Tarquin lived, or that Cæsar was slain by Brutus;—that Columbus discovered America, or that Cortez conquered Mexico; yet we no more doubt the certainty of these facts, than we believe it possible for the same thing to be and not to be at the same time.

Indeed even probability, where no better evidence is attainable, has a demand on our belief. And this holds good on all occasions where the contrary probabilities are either fewer in number, or less considerable in weight. And he who in this case would withhold his assent from a given fact, because the evidence adduced rose no higher, must violate the principles of his intellectual nature, and disbelieve through unreasonable incredulity. Such a person must reject what he admits to be less improbable than that which he embraces, and remain a sceptic through doubts which nothing but folly can keep alive!

Ridiculous as such a mode of conduct may appear, it is perhaps more frequently adopted than considered. And thousands, from what they blindly conceive to be an attachment to reason,

cherish their scruples, and argue in their defence, from grounds which have a less permanent foundation than those probabilities have which they discard. Such characters seem hardly to be aware of the absurdities into which they plunge themselves.

That the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and that we shall be changed,—and that all who are in their graves shall come forth,—are declarations so plainly recorded in scripture, that no one who admits its authority can doubt the fact. And I should readily allow every argument to be superfluous which might be drawn from other sources, if all those persons to whom we appeal were to admit the authenticity of the sacred volume. Unhappily this is not the case. Men of sceptical minds smile at those arguments which are founded on authority. To that which is human they refuse to submit, and they doubt the existence of that which is divine. To substitute, therefore, the letter of scripture in the room of philosophical disquisition, would be to erect a tribunal which they refuse to acknowledge, and to appeal to an authority which they spurn with contempt. But while with them we resort to one common ground which is admitted by all, every objection against the sources of our arguments must necessarily disappear, and the reasonings which we advance must stand or fall by their own intrinsic excellence or defect.

With men of this persuasion, the resurrection of the body is viewed in no better light than that of a

questionable dogma, which precludes all rational appeals: with some it is presumed to be big with absurdity: and with others to involve some palpable contradictions. As Christians, we admit in common with these men, that whatsoever includes a contradiction could never have been revealed by GOD. And hence, in proportion to that regard which we have for the sacred volume as a revelation which is divine, it is incumbent on us to rescue this momentous article of the Christian faith from so foul an imputation. This can only be done by a rational investigation of the subject,—by a removal of those objections which are usually brought to make it appear incredible that GOD should raise the dead; and by placing the fact itself in such a light as will free it from those charges which are made to excite disgust. It is our duty to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us. How far I have succeeded in this attempt, the public must determine. But however this may issue, I flatter myself, that all will admit the apology which this view of the subject presents, for the methods of inquiry which I have pursued.

With these views before me, I have presumed but little on scripture authority. Such passages as I have quoted, I have surveyed in a philosophical light, and collected on the whole a mass of evidence which, when taken in the aggregate, I flatter myself, will silence contempt where it cannot produce

conviction. The proofs which I have adduced in support of the Resurrection may be considered in two lights; first, those which, though drawn from other sources, have been found congenial with the principles of revelation; and secondly, such as the philosophy of the sacred writings has held out to illuminate mankind. And if from the result of all, the fact shall appear to be so far rescued from objections, and placed in such a light, as to be rendered morally certain, I shall not think that I have written in vain.

But while I assign these reasons for the mode of conduct which I have adopted, it is perhaps necessary that I obviate an undue impression which the preceding observations may have made. In my preface to the Essay on the Soul, I have introduced on a similar occasion the following remark. "Let it not be thought, because I have declined all appeal to the sacred volume, that I have therefore drawn over the book of God the most distant shade of disrespect. The mind which can harbour such an idea, must form but very partial conceptions of my undertaking. The Bible, I consider as the great repository of sacred knowledge; and moral philosophy can be no longer right, than while it acts in concert with revelation. I consider moral truth, as an elevated mountain, the summit of which, revelation unveils to the eye of faith; without involving us in the tedious drudgery of painful speculations. To some of these views, philosophy will di-

rect us, through a labyrinth of intricacies ; and after human understanding has put forth all her efforts, it is ‘ by toil and art the steep assent we gain.’ If, however, in any given momentous instance, the tardy movements of philosophy will lead us to the same conclusions which the Bible has already formed, it affords us no contemptible evidence of its authenticity ; and it challenges our belief in those instances where we can trace no relation.” The sentiment of the above paragraph I again repeat ; and now urge on the Resurrection of the Body, what I then asserted on the Immortality of the Soul. On my sentiments respecting the validity and authenticity of the sacred writings, my friends and acquaintances need no information, and those who are strangers to me, have no right to dispute what I now declare.

My design in writing, was to endeavour to throw some light on an important subject which appeared involved in much obscurity, but which I thought susceptible of more rational proofs than I had any where seen adduced. And if I have so far succeeded in my attempt as to have set the fact in a more conspicuous light, either by the selection of arguments,—the removal of obstacles,—or the solution of difficulties, I shall feel myself easy amidst those motley opinions which an original work rarely fails to excite. It is not in my power to anticipate either the censures or applauses which await it. Whichsoever may be bestowed, they are only of a

momentary duration. But if that utility at which I have aimed, actually succeed to crown my exertions with success, the satisfaction resulting from it, which will commence in time, will be but a prelude to that which shall be renewed beyond the grave.

I now commit it to the world, soliciting the reader to make due allowances for the difficulty and newness of the undertaking, in conjunction with those additional circumstances which are placed before him. This to him is my only request; it is one, however, which I think is not unreasonable. But above all, I crave the blessing of Almighty God, who alone can render it subservient to his wise and gracious purposes. Nothing but this can give it lasting utility, and crown it with unfading renown. But through this, He may render it beneficial in any way which seems meet to his infinite wisdom. He may use it as a medium to remove the doubts of the unstable, or stimulate others, by the deficiencies and errors which they may discover, to investigate the subject with greater accuracy, on some future occasion, when the hand that traces these lines shall consume in the repositories of death. Our future abodes which we now contemplate at a distance, we see at present through a glass darkly, but these, and our manner of existence in them will be shortly realized, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

ST. AUSTELL, *March 20, 1809.*

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AN
ESSAY
ON THE
Identity and General Resurrection
OF THE
HUMAN BODY.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE STATE OF MAN BEFORE THE INTRO-
DUCTION OF MORAL EVIL.

SECTION I.

General View of the Subject.

AS no being can be infinite but God, no doubt can be entertained that all finite intelligences had a beginning; and those which had a beginning must owe their origin to another. This remark is appropriate to man, and is not confined to any detached light in which we may view him, but is equally applicable both to his body and his soul.

But though both matter and spirit must have had a beginning, it will not thence follow that they must have had an end. They may

change their modes of being, and their relations to each other, in all the variety of forms which is within the reach of possibility, and yet remain at the same distance from the real absence of being as they were when God first called them into existence.

That a spirit, though created, cannot die, is plainly demonstrated to us by the deathless state of angelic natures, and by the immortality of the human soul. And we plainly discover in these two instances, that beginning of existence does not include an end. We also discover in all the modes which any given portion of matter is capable of assuming, that it is always at an infinite distance from a perfect nonentity. Something and nothing are extremes which never can meet together; and the distance which lies between them no approaches can possibly fill up: and therefore the real absence of being which is a nonentity, must always be at an equal distance from all given substances to which these possible modes of existence are ascribed.

The combinations which the particles of matter form with one another, are indeed, continually dissolving; new unions are constantly taking place in regular succession to each other; and the modifications of matter, seem to undergo perpetual changes. But we can trace no more analogy between the real absence of matter and a world, because a world and an atom must be at an equal distance from the real absence of all that is material. If therefore, neither the infinite divisibility of matter, nor the various modes which it undergoes

and is capable of undergoing, can reach the inter-
rial constitution of matter, or otherwise affect it,
than by altering its configuration, while its essence
remains untouched, and while its substance is en-
tire, we may safely infer, unless God should
alter the laws of nature, that matter itself will be
as perpetual as spirit; and that it must continue
for ever, under such forms and in such modes, as
God in his infinite wisdom shall think proper.

That man is formed of matter and spirit, will
admit of very little doubt. While in union with
each other, these substances partake of one com-
mon life, and are cemented together by ties which
are at once permanent and unknown.

That the spiritual part of man shall never die,
is to be inferred from the properties of the human
soul.* The soul therefore, from its superior nature,
must be capable of subsisting without the aid of
the body, in a distinct and separate state. And
that the body, when separated from its union with
the soul, must cease to act, we are convinced of
by the most unquestionable proof. In that state of
separation, all compact seems to be dissolved; the
spirit retires into another region, to mix with beings
whose natures are analogous to its own; while the
body is consigned over, and apparently for ever, to
darkness and corruption.

The compact being thus dissolved, all union en-

* See my Essay on the Immateriality and Immortality of the
Human Soul. 8vo. 1803. 2nd edit.

tirely broken off between the spiritual and material parts of man, and even the constituent parts of the body ceasing to adhere to each other, and the particles of which it was composed incorporating with other particles of matter, it becomes a question of the most serious importance, whether this body shall rise again or not?

To inquire into this fundamental article of our belief;—to know what evidence we have in favour of this doctrine;—what the nature of that evidence ought to be, which we might rationally expect on such a subject;—how far difficulties should be permitted to operate against conviction, and to lay an embargo on belief;—to know whether Revelation is our exclusive guide, or whether God has furnished us with strong intimations of a future resurrection from other sources:—to know what these sources are, whence we derive our evidence, and how far the proofs may be deemed conclusive which may be adduced in favour of this important point,—are questions which I propose to discuss in the following sheets, and which will occasionally become the subjects of investigation.

As we admit that man must have had a beginning, and as his material part is the subject of our present inquiry, it is necessary that we first turn our thoughts to his original state. It is in that state alone that we can view him detached from these extraneous circumstances which now involve the evidences which I am about to examine; and which lie scattered over that pathless desert which I shall attempt to explore. In order that the mind may be

detached from its local views and partial perceptions of man, we must take a survey of creation, since we can only infer his primary state, and the real nature of his original condition, from the relation in which he then stood to his Maker. And therefore to those attributes of God, which we conspicuously discern in all his conduct and actions towards his creatures, and particularly in that which applies to man, we must necessarily appeal.

SECTION II.

On the Immutability of God.

THAT the human body cannot have been eternal, is a truth which will admit of no doubt, and can require no proof; it must therefore owe its origin to a superior cause, and that cause must be God.

That God, from his nature and attributes, must profess all possible perfection, it will be needless to prove, because it is a truth which it is useless to deny. And if all possible perfections are possessed by him, immutability must be included among the essential attributes of his nature.

Without entering into any formal proof of this truth I shall assume it as an admitted point, because those by whom it is denied, are under the necessity of undeifying his nature, and ultimately denying his existence. The existence of God is a

ground-work which I presume no intelligent mind will hesitate to grant me, and from those who refuse me this point, I shall take the liberty to appeal.

If then, the existence of the divine nature be admitted, the existence of all possible perfections are inseparable from the divine essence; and, in conjunction with each other, they are truths which must stand or fall together. To admit the divine nature, is to admit the divine attributes; and to admit the divine attributes is to admit the divine perfections; and the instant we attempt to separate them, we involve ourselves in palpable contradictions.

Taking therefore the infinite perfections of God as an admitted point, I contend, that these perfections must include immutability as an essential property of his nature. For could we imagine that God possesses all possible perfections, and yet suppose immutability not to be included in the list of these perfections, we must suppose him capable of changes which are incompatible with those attributes and perfections which we ascribe to him. A being who sees reason to counteract to-day, what was accomplished yesterday, must be wiser now than he was then. And the action of *to-day*, plainly tells us that the action of *yesterday* must have been erroneous, though it then appeared right and just. But if the knowledge of the eternal God, be greater now than it was then, it is a certain fact that his knowledge was not perfect yesterday, and it is highly probable that it is yet in a state of imperfection. A knowledge which can admit of in-

crease in any stage of progression, cannot in those stages be perfect; and consequently cannot be infinite; and that which is not infinite can neither apply to God, nor belong to his nature. But as God must be infinite in all his perfections, and as perfect knowledge must be included in those perfections, no increase or diminution of his knowledge can possibly be admitted. And therefore, perfectly acquainted as he must be with past, present, and future, with all contingencies, and all possible circumstances, no changes can take place in him, his immutability therefore necessarily arises from the nature of his other perfections, and the nature of his existence.

That apparent changes, are however perfectly consistent with absolute immutability, must be admitted, because *apparent* changes are perfectly consistent with God. Immutability may *seem* to change in its actions towards changeable creatures, while in itself it remains perfect, unaltered and entire.

We are furnished with evidence on this point from our constant observations of the heavenly bodies; since we behold in them an apparent and a relative change through every succeeding day. But the stations which the fixed stars hold in the regions of space, are permanent and immutable, notwithstanding the perpetual revolutions which they seem to undergo. And were the orb which we inhabit as fixed as they, all would appear as they really are; and the various revolutions which de-

scribe our days, our months, and years; we should then inquire after in vain.

The changes which we perceive, reside not in them but in us. The stars are fixed, while the earth is perpetually revolving; and it is the inaccuracy of popular observations which induces us to transfer the changes we perceive from ourselves to them, and to charge upon the fixed stars, that change of place which belongs to the globe which we inhabit, and which in them has no existence. In like manner, it is perhaps not impious to transfer the analogy, to the immutability of God, and the mutability of ourselves, we can then with safety "assert eternal providence, and justify the ways of God to man."

That there is in God an immutable hatred to vice must be unquestionable, vice being the reverse of his nature; and that there must be in him an immutable attachment to holiness, it being congenial to his essence, must be admitted on the same ground. And as God is thus immutable in himself, so long as his rational creatures hold their respective stations, in which his goodness had previously placed them, so long are his perfections bound to protect them from every evil; and consequently to preserve them from dissolution and decay. But when his creatures change their stations through the mutability of their natures, they change their relation to God; and a change in their condition must be the necessary result of their departure from him.

But this change arises not from any mutability in God, but from the immutability of his nature; for, as the perfections of God were bound to protect and preserve those who were dependent upon him, so, by the same immutability of his nature, God was bound to withdraw his protection from them, when they departed from that station in which his goodness had placed them, and engaged to protect them. As God manifests his love to all who are found in the way of holiness, and manifests his hatred to all who are found in the way of vice, it is evident that a continuance in the way of holiness is necessary to the continuance of his favour: and we can no more conceive that these cases can be reversed while the nature of God remains immutable, than we can conceive the same thing to be and not to be in the same instant.

If God direct his love to A. and to the inhabitants of A. and his hatred to B. and to the inhabitants of B. we have the case precisely laid down before us; and we see with exactness the true situations of the respective inhabitants both of A. and B. But if the inhabitants of A. should retire from their station, and depart to B. it is evident that they would go from love to hatred, and yet be under the same God, who was, and is, and ever shall be, unchangeable in all his ways. And hence we may clearly discover that apparent changeableness, and real immutability are perfectly compatible with one another as they refer to God. But as they affect man, the conduct of God is really changed towards him, notwithstanding God is in himself eternal and unchangeable, in all his ways.

Nor are these reasonings confined exclusively to a moral view of man. They will apply with equal force to all his bodily as well as mental powers. For as the human body formed a conspicuous part of creation, and as the life of man was guaranteed to him, on condition of his abstinence from moral evil, the perpetuity of the human body must have been included under this guarantee, and its dissolution on this ground must have been for ever unknown. The promise of life was suspended upon human obedience; and it extended no further. For as perpetuity of life was the reward of obedience, so death was in part the punishment of disobedience; and as man by his departure from obedience, forfeited his claim to perpetuity of life, so by his disobedience he subjected himself to that dissolution of body, which was included in the punishment annexed to immoral action.

Thus may we see in one view the origin of the dissolution of our bodies, while we contemplate the immutability of God. We see our dissolution originating in ourselves, while the immutability of God stands detached from every charge; we see his immutability engaged to protect rectitude, but nothing more; we see man departing from it, and thereby sinking into that dissolution, which, abstractedly from this circumstance, could never have existed.

If God, under the existence of present circumstances, were to perpetuate our bodies, he must depart from those rules of invariable rectitude, which are always inseparable from his ways; and his immutability, under the various changes of man, would

appear in a very questionable light. He must in this case change with his changeable creatures, and immutability will then no more attach to him than it does now to us. The conduct of God must in this case appear dependent upon the actions of man; controlled by caprice, and subjected to those directions which the wayward sallies of our passions would impose.

But the conduct of God is fixed upon principles of a more permanent nature. The irregularities which are visible both in the moral and the natural world are attributable to other causes; while the immutability of God stands unimpeached. It is because we have retired from that station in which his goodness had placed us, and in which his immutability had engaged to protect us, that our bodies die. And the evils of which we complain, do not overtake us because God is changeable, but because God is immutable in all his ways, and because we are changeable.

SECTION III.

That the Human Body must have been originally Immortal, proved from the primeval State of Man, and the Immutability of God, considered together.

FROM those general views, which, in the preceding Section, we have taken of the immutability of God, and of those changes with which it is compatible, let

us now turn our attention to the same attribute, and consider it in connection with man in his primeval state; and the evidence in favour of primitive immortality, will perhaps appear in a conspicuous light. And, therefore, without inquiring into the motives or cause which induced God to create the world, I shall fix on the fact itself, and only presume that creation did take place. For whatever the cause or motives were, certain it is, that such cause and motives did exist, and hence Almighty Power and Goodness called the universe into being.

That a design to create man did exist in God at the time of creation, is demonstrated by fact; and therefore a design to destroy the human body could not then have had a being. For if we suppose that a design to destroy the human body, did exist in God at the moment in which he created it, we must suppose him to have been actuated by two opposite designs, the one to create, and the other to destroy the thing created. But in thus supposing, we place the designs of God, not only in a state of hostility to each other, but in a state of hostility to his attributes; and we make a principle of immutability to produce designs, which, in the same moment, are destructive of each other. But since these suppositions are contrary to the divine perfections, and perfectly incompatible with the immutability of his nature, we must conclude, that those suppositions which are irreconcilable with the nature of God, are at once inapplicable to him, and false in fact. Hence then the conclusion appears to be inevitable, that no design to destroy the hu-

man body, could, at the moment of creation, have existed in God ; and while we retain our idea of his immutability, we are precluded from admitting the possibility of any such subsequent design from taking place. For since, under our present consideration, man is presumed to sustain the same relative situation to God, which he sustained in the moment of his creation, no cause of a design to destroy him could originate with him. And as God must be immutable in his nature, as has been proved in the preceding Section, we are forbidden to suppose that any such design could possibly originate with *him*. And hence it follows, that as no design to destroy the human body could, under actual and existing facts, have originated either with man or God, so no such design could possibly have existed ; and, therefore the human body must have been exempted from dissolution and decay.

Indeed, while we admit God to be the creator of man, we must view him as an infinite Being, and consequently as one that is immutable ; and while we consider him thus as an immutable Being, it will be impossible for us to admit the possibility, either of dissolution or death. For a man, standing precisely in the same situation in which he stood, when God first called him into existence, must have sustained the same relation to his maker ; to suppose that he can be both created and destroyed, and yet uniformly in both cases sustain the same relation to the cause of both ; while we admit, at the same time, the cause of both to be absolutely immutable,

will amount to something more than a simple contradiction.

A being which continues the same after it is created that it was when called into existence, can include no more cause of its dissolution, the moment after, than it did in the moment of its creation. The same reasonings which will hold good to-day, will, upon the same principle, hold equally good to-morrow ; they will be equally available the day following, and we may extend our observations through the whole progress of duration. If therefore the human body can possibly be destroyed, during any period of existence subsequently to creation, without containing within itself any cause of that destruction, it is evident that this cause must be lodged in some other source. But since no other source can possibly be found but God, if the destruction of the human body were possible, we must, under these considerations, either attribute to him the destruction of the human body upon the same identical principle which gave birth to creation, or we must suppose the Almighty to be actuated by contradictory designs. But as we can no more conceive it possible that the Almighty can be actuated by contradictory designs, than we can conceive, that destruction and creation can arise from the same principle, (which is making two opposite effects to result from the same cause,) the destruction of the human body, under present circumstances, cannot possibly be imputed to God. And since the supposition, in either case, involves a plain and positive contradiction, the result is in-

evitable, namely, that the human body must necessarily have been immortal.

The same moral causes which exist when the body is destroyed, must have been in existence when it was created; because God is necessarily immutable, and the creature is presumed to have undergone no change. If, therefore, under these given circumstances, the body could have been dissolved, we must presume, either that creation and dissolution are the same thing, or that two opposite effects have resulted from the same cause. To suppose the former we are forbidden by fact, and to suppose the latter is a contradiction. The final result must therefore be, that the human body must have been immortal. And hence also, since this theory and present fact are at variance with each other, the dissolution which the human body undergoes, must be attributed to some other cause; a cause distinct from any which has hitherto been explored; a cause which could not have existed when man was first called into being; a cause which did not then reside in man, and which could not at any period whatsoever reside in God.

What the precise state of Adam's body was, previously to his fall, is a question which has employed the pens of many writers, and has been productive of a multitude of conjectures. And, indeed, in cases where we are left without decisive evidence, conjecture and probability must become our only guides.

With some, the body of Adam has been supposed *luminous*, with others *transparent*, and with others

again *light*, *aerial*, and *spiritual*. And these conjectures seem to have been adopted purely to account for that immortality, which has been so uniformly attributed to it. The various arguments which have been adduced in favour of these different theories, it would be useless to detail. Every opinion will have its abettors, and every argument its proselytes ; error will have its advocates as well as truth.

But on this point the book of God is silent ; and from this circumstance we feel an assurance, that it is a case in which philosophy can afford us little or no assistance, conjecture must be the only foundation on which these opinions rest. The principal facts which we learn from the sacred records on this subject are, *that God formed the material part of man out of the dust of the earth, and then breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.* But why the body of Adam should be supposed *luminous*, *transparent*, or *aerial*, are conjectures, the probability of which I have yet to learn.

Indeed, I can have no conception how a body which is aerial, can include within it those solid parts which we denominate bones, from which class the rib was taken, out of which woman was afterwards formed. Neither can I have any conception how transparency can become a property of particles which are in themselves opaque, and disposed as they are in a substance so multifarious and complex as the body of man. Nor can I discover, admitting his body to have been transparent, what advantages

would have accrued from such a property. A body that is transparent can be no further removed, in consequence of that transparency, from dissolution, than if it were opaque, like those which we now possess; so that the very end for which the conjecture is introduced must be defeated, because no connection can be traced between the premises and conclusion. For if the body of Adam were as volatile even as light itself, still the union of its component parts would stand upon the same principle upon which ours now rests. And certain it is, that the volatile particles which we have supposed, would require the power of adhesion to preserve the connection between them, as much so as if we were to suppose them to be more nearly related to those of our own. Whether, therefore, we suppose the body of Adam to be *volatile* or *gross*, to be *transparent* or *opaque*, to be *luminous* or *dark*, as the same power must be alike necessary in each case to make the different particles adhere, we shall still be obliged to claim the assistance of some quality to establish that adhesion of the parts which is necessary to ensure perpetuity. This, therefore, must be a quality, which neither transparency nor opacity can possess, and which can reside in no external appearance whatsoever. The immortality of Adam's body must, therefore, have depended upon other causes than can be derived from a mere combination of particles, in what form soever we suppose them to be modified.

SECTION IV.

*On the primitive and elementary State of Matter,
and the Nature of simple and compounded
Bodies.*

IT has frequently been asserted, that all compounded bodies have within themselves an internal tendency to dissolution and decay ; and hence it has been inferred, that the body of Adam must have been destitute of that natural immortality which we have attributed to it in its primeval state. Of the abstract fact, little or no doubt can be entertained ; but even this fact can only be admitted under certain limitations, for in the original state of matter things could not have been so.

In the original chaotic state of matter, before the elements were fixed in their distinct abodes, every particle of matter must have been destitute of any common or particular centre ; and it is certain, under these considerations, whatever might have been the peculiar modification of any given particles, that they could have contained within them no internal tendency to depart from those stations which had been assigned them ; or even to separate from one another. And as all matter must in itself be stationary and inert, and as all external impulse must necessarily be removed by the supposition, it is certain that all bodies composed of these simple materials, must have remained for ever equally removed from mutation and decay.

That the real internal essence of matter, whatever that essence may be, must remain the same under every possible modification, few, if any, will attempt either to deny or doubt; because it is from this unknown essence, that those essential properties result which are known; while, from these known essential properties, we are enabled to form distinct perceptions of those different substances, which are presented to our view. Now, since all divisions of any given substance, must imply the previous existence of that substance; and as those elements into which matter is now divided, were originally drawn from matter, it is evident that there has been a period in which matter must have existed, abstractedly from those elements which now engross the material world. And consequently air, earth, water, and fire, could not have been co-eval with matter itself. It is, therefore, in this state only that we can view matter, detached from all internal tendencies and extraneous impulses; and it is here alone that we can view this substance, in its real and most simple state.

The elements into which all matter is now divided, may probably be considered as its simple state; and we may readily conceive, when the constituent particles of any given body are resolved into those primitive elements, out of which they were first taken, that then these particles are reduced to their primitive abodes. In our common modes of language, and in the present structure of the world, this sentiment is undoubtedly just; but even

this elementary condition of matter, must, for reasons already assigned, be one remove from its primary state. For as the elements of this world can be nothing more than divisions of matter, and as all substances must exist before they can be divided, so the state of matter undivided into elements, must be more simple than the elements themselves now are, how simple soever they may appear.

In this original state of things, before the elements were formed, they could not possibly have had any mode of existence distinct from one another; and consequently the particles which now compose these elements could have had no distinct points to which they could severally tend. All must have resorted to one common home, and not a single atom could have had any tendency to seek any new abode. In this original state, while all the elements were mixed in their pregnant causes, every particle of matter, as to its nature, its tendency, and its properties, must have been alike. And in this state, whatever combinations any atoms might have assumed, no tendency could have resided within them, to remove them from that station in which they had been previously fixed.

As the different elements had no distinct existence, so they could not possibly have operated, to recal those atoms to distinct regions; and as all matter must be in itself inert, and resting on its common centre, no tendency to remove could reside within the particles themselves. And consequently all bodies which are removed from external impulse

and internal tendency to motion, whatever their internal constitution may be, must continue for ever.

That all matter, in its most simple state, must have been capable of divisibility, is demonstrated by fact, because it was afterward divided into those elements which now exist. We are, therefore, led to conclude, that whether we presume matter to have been modified into a human form, or into a combination, either more or less complex, an union of divisible particles in either case appears necessary, without including a necessity of dissolution, any more than was included in it *in* a purely chaotic state. For as in each of these cases, a combination of parts appears inseparable from matter, so each given portion of matter must have been formed of similar materials, possessing similar inertness, though somewhat differently combined: and so likewise in all these cases, they must have been alike destitute of all tendency to dissolution and decay. Even those particles which we have presumed to have been modified into a human form, must have retained their respective stations; and continuing under these circumstances, the modification itself must have continued for ever. For as the stability of the modification, depends entirely upon the stability of those particles, on which that modification depends for its own existence, so the stability of the particles must communicate stability to the modification, and therefore the particles remaining unchanged, the modification itself must continue for ever.

That God was able, out of this original state of

matter, before the elements had obtained their separate state of existence, to form a human body, had he been so disposed, no man can seriously doubt, who will admit him to be possessed of infinite power. It is from this vast mass of materials that God has actually made what are commonly termed the elements themselves; out of these also he has made the world, and the material part of man. And surely we cannot doubt that the same power and wisdom which formed the elementary particles of matter, the world, and man, could, from the same materials, have formed man without the intervention of those elements, which, separately considered, did not originally exist. And if God, in this primary state of matter, had modified any given number or quantity of particles into a human body, it is certain under the circumstances given, that the particles thus modified, could have had no tendency to separate from one another, any more than matter under any other mode, could have had an internal tendency to infinite divisibility. And therefore, as the particles modified could have had no such tendency to separate from one another, the modification, which depended upon the stability of their situation, could not have been lost; and consequently the human body, into which we have supposed these particles to have been wrought, must have acquired perpetuity, and have been completely placed beyond the reach of dissolution and decay.

Under these considerations, the particles of which the body is presumed to have been composed, could have no specific gravitation towards their respective elements, because these elements as

yet had no distinct existence. And that common being, which we may presume these elements to have had in their pregnant causes, must have resided as much in the particles themselves, which were thus modified into a human body, as in any other parts of that chaotic mass, out of which these particles were at first taken. The inertness of these atoms must have prevented them from begetting in themselves any tendency to depart from that mode which we have presumed; and as one mode, in this state, must have been as congenial to their natures as another, that of a human body could include within it nothing more opposed to their natures, than those atoms experienced, which lay in the undistinguished mass, in which matter received its first formation. Where, inertness pervades any given mass, from which all external causes are totally removed, through which the parts of that mass might receive an influence or impulse, there, no tendency to change can possibly exist; and a body thus constituted, and thus situated, must necessarily remain for ever. For since the stability of the modification must depend upon the permanency of the particles modified, the modification must be as far removed from dissolution, as the particles themselves are from separation; and consequently both must continue for ever. Hence then this final conclusion follows; that though, in *the present state of things*, all compounded bodies have within them a natural tendency to dissolution; and though every particle perpetually tends towards its elementary abode, yet, in the original state of things, it could

not have been so. The tendencies, therefore, which we perceive, must have arisen from some other source;—a source which, in that remote period of duration, could have had no existence.

SECTION V.

Arguments tending to prove, that the Immortality of the Body of Adam was secured by the Efficacy of the Tree of Life, notwithstanding the natural Tendency of the Parts to Dissolution.

WHEN, from this remote view, in which we have been considering the constituent divisible parts of matter, before the elements were called into any distinct existence, we turn our thoughts to those elements into which it has been since divided, and from which the human body has been actually formed, the natural tendency of all compounded bodies to dissolution assumes a very different form. In this case, without all doubt, the various particles of which the human body was actually formed, have a native tendency to resolve themselves into their pristine elements, through an inherent tendency somewhat analogous to gravitation. This propensity, or tendency, seems to have been impressed upon all the parts of matter with which we are intimately acquainted, in what element soever they may reside. But what the origin of this tendency is, how far it actually extends, and what the bound-

daries of its operations are; appear to be points which, with exact precision, we cannot comprehend.

That Adam, when created, was permitted to *eat of all the trees in the garden*, except one which was interdicted, is plain scripture; and from this circumstance, it may be as plainly inferred that nutrition was necessary to the preservation of his being. † And since he possessed those appetites and faculties, which were calculated to perform all the functions of animal life, I can discover nothing which could mark the nature of his body, as being distinct from that of our own. Nor have I hitherto discovered any peculiar properties which his body could possess, except that manly beauty which must have resulted from that perfect state of moral rectitude, which was inseparable from the primeval state of man. The command which was given to our first parents to *be fruitful and multiply, and to replenish the earth*, proves them to have been of the same earthly mould with ourselves; though mortality could not be applied to their condition, nor could death attach itself to the great progenitor of mankind. †

† There can be no doubt, that the human body was originally more excellent than it is at present, and we are even compelled to conclude that the body of Adam approached much nearer to a state of perfection, than the bodies of any of his posterity have since been able to attain. The changes which moral evil has introduced are such as baffle all calculation; and it is a point of inextricable difficulty for us to decide, how far we have descended in the

scale of human dignity ; how much our organs are impaired ; how much we have sunk below that standard of primeval glory, which was once the distinguishing characteristic of man. ★

As man came immediately from the hands of the Almighty, nothing, either of moral evil or natural imperfection, could have been found in his nature. And so far as beings with capacities and faculties which were limited like those of the human species, were capable of bearing any resemblance to the moral perfections of God, man must have been created in a state of finite perfection. At the same time the human body, which formed an essential part of man, must, as coming from the hands of so excellent a workman, in conjunction with the rank which man sustained in the empire of creation, have been the standard of all terrestrial beauty and perfection. ★

The pure state of the atmosphere in which man was placed, must have been congenial to the state of his body, and the temperature of all around him, must have prevented all such effects as are produced by the intensity of the heats of summer and the colds of winter. The temperature of the climate, the purity of the atmosphere, the odoriferous exhalations which all vegetative nature conspired to yield, being in perfect unison with his bodily organs, must have contributed to the longevity of a being not otherwise immortal, and lengthened out the existence of man to an extent of duration, of which modern instances can furnish us with no examples. In short, the happiness which must have resulted from

such a harmonious state of things, it is hard to conceive, and still more difficult to express. ✕ It must have been a felicity to which we are strangers, and of which we must be content to remain ignorant in this state of being, and which, probably, we are under the necessity of dying to comprehend. ✕

In the midst of this general harmony, from what quarter could death possibly arise? Could death originate in God? This must be contrary to his nature, and contrary to the facts which we have been contemplating. The general harmony of all nature had demonstrated, that the designs of God were to communicate happiness, and the immutability of his nature precluded the possibility of a change. It must have been contrary to the divine nature to lessen that felicity which he had bestowed, which death must certainly have effected; and therefore the conclusion is certain, that death could not possibly originate in God.

Could then the dissolution of the body flow from the body itself? This, under circumstances which we now review, could not be possible. The body gave not union to the particles of which it was composed, and consequently could not destroy the adhesion of its component parts. The simple particles of matter never can be lost, in what form soever they may be, or may have been combined. And the modification of these particles into a human body, through the supernatural agency of God, must necessarily have been retained also, unless that supernatural agency was withdrawn, which his immutability rendered impossible; or until some other

adequate cause should dissolve the union between the combined atoms, and reduce them to their elementary state.

But what arguments soever may be adduced in favour of primeval immortality, there is still a difficulty of considerable importance, which it is necessary to remove. The elementary divisions which had taken place in matter, had removed it from its primary condition, and impressed upon it the influence of gravitation, or of something analogous thereto, which, by acting upon every particle, must have communicated to each a tendency, which was unknown in its primitive state. The body of Adam was not created until these divisions had taken place, and being composed of atoms which had been selected from these different regions, the surrounding elements must have acted upon every part, so that the silent but insinuating impulses which were imperceptibly communicated, must have been productive of the most astonishing effects.

Compounded of atoms, and formed of dissoluble parts, the body of Adam, though possessed of immortality, must in itself have been capable of dissolution; while, being free from all moral evil, it must have been placed beyond the influence of mortality; and this circumstance must have ensured to human nature that exemption from death, which sinless natures can alone claim as their exclusive privilege. Destitute of sin, he was not entitled to its wages; Justice therefore could inflict no punishment; and consequently his body must have been placed beyond the reach of death. By being desti-

tute of the cause, he was exempted from its effect, and entitled to a mode and duration of being, which could know no termination, and be exposed to no decay. It is therefore to the influence of *moral evil* that we must look, for the primary source of those natural evils which imbitter life; and, finally, for the decay of the human body in all the gradual revolutions and changes, which are attendant upon mortals in this afflicted state of things; and that ultimate dissolution of its component parts, which invariably succeeds to death.

It has been proved in the preceding Sections, that if moral evil had never entered into the world, death would necessarily have been unknown; and this fact arises from the immutability and moral justice of God. But as the human body was made from a combination of those distinct elements, into which matter had been divided, some further process became necessary in the divine economy, to perpetuate the duration of this compound, and to preserve it from natural decay. For since the matter of which the body was formed had been collected from the different elements, we may naturally presume, that the particles which were thus collected, included within themselves a natural tendency to seek their respective elementary abodes.

Whether the dissolution to which all compounded bodies are now liable, arise from the peculiar nature of the atmosphere with which we are surrounded, or from that inherent tendency which resides within the particles themselves, continually urging them towards their native abodes, is a point

on which I have no occasion to decide.✕ It appears highly probable, that dissolution arises from the mutual influence of both.✕ For, though all matter be in itself perfectly indifferent to motion and rest, and is perfectly passive when removed from all external influence, yet, from a native tendency somewhat analogous to gravitation, which is now impressed upon every particle, these particles, while removed from their primitive elements, and detained by an adhesive power, in any given combinations, in which they may be placed, perpetually seek their elementary state of repose. Nevertheless, while the power of adhesion continues, through which these exiled particles are detained within the confines of the compounded body, this adhesion must be too strong for the elementary tendency of the particles to overcome. And hence it is that bodies continue in existence through the adhesion of the parts, while the parts themselves are actuated by opposite tendencies, and are constantly seeking a separation from each other. And hence also it may be undeniably inferred, that while this adhesive power continues permanent, the particles themselves must preserve their respective stations, and necessarily remain in contact with each other, notwithstanding the opposite tendencies which are presumed to reside in all.

For though we have admitted the native and inherent tendency, of the different elementary particles, to separate, and to seek their native homes, yet, while by the power of adhesion this contact is preserved, the whole body must be nearly in a passive state; at

least, it must be passive in proportion to the adjustment of those elements of which it is composed. The power of adhesion which cements the parts must be considered as counteracting all hostile tendencies; and as making a point of union to arise from that mutual contact which it continues to preserve. And probably as this adhesive energy counteracts that tendency which the particles have, to seek their respective elements, matter must be reduced to nearly the same condition, as that in which it would have been if no such tendency had resided within any part of the compounded body. It will therefore follow, that the dissolution of the body cannot be justly said to originate exclusively in any tendency which is lodged within the particles of which it is composed, because this tendency is subdued by the power of adhesion, but dissolution must primarily originate in some external cause. This cause appears to be the atmosphere.

That atmospheric air, by its penetrating qualities, must be capable of entering most of the hidden recesses of all compounded bodies, is a truth too obvious to require proof. And we are well assured from observation and experiment, that it is capable of destroying that adhesive quality, which combines the distinct particles of which the human body is formed, and through which the different elements adhere together. The adhesion being destroyed, through the penetrating influence of atmospheric air, particle after particle must be disengaged from the preceding union, and disengaged from their compounded state. And as this discharge of the particles from their ad-

hesive state, must permit that tendency in each to operate, which had been suspended through that power of adhesion which is now no more, they must naturally seek their elementary abodes, in which they must continue until removed by another external impulse.

On the ground of this theory it will perhaps be objected. "That as the elements were in existence
 " at the time when Adam was first formed, the
 " atmosphere must have acted upon him, and
 " therefore the final dissolution of the human body
 " is a necessary consequence of its compounded
 " state, and, that the event must have taken place,
 " although moral evil had never entered into the
 " world.

That the above objection contains a difficulty which opposes itself to the theory I have been advancing I most readily allow, but I flatter myself that it is a difficulty, which will admit of a satisfactory solution: and that this solution may be found in the *Tree of Life*.*

* As there must be in the particles of all bodies which are compounded of different elements, a natural tendency to seek their primitive abodes, Infinite goodness has wisely provided for this tendency, and counteracted its efficacy by that power of adhesion which preserves the body modified. Thus providing for the perpetuity of the compounded body, by the compound itself, notwithstanding the opposite tendencies of the particles of which it is composed.

But here a new difficulty arises relative to the body of Adam. The air which he respired, and which was absolutely necessary to the existence of animal life, possessed, through its penetrating influence, a power to destroy that adhesion

That the tree of life was placed in the garden of Eden will admit of no doubt with those who believe the Bible, and it is incumbent on those who disbelieve it to account for facts which they dare not deny; and to substitute in the room of scripture a more rational account than that which they despise. As this tree of life was planted in the garden by him who does nothing in vain, we are well assured that it must have been planted there for some purpose, and to know what that purpose was, is the principal question remaining, into which we must now inquire.

It is expressly called, in the language of Moses *the tree of life*, which name could not have been given to it, unless it were endued with a *life-giving* quality. Now certain it is, that this tree could not have been designed to communicate the origin of life, because this supposition is contradicted by the whole train of circumstances connected with it.

which prevented the particles from retiring to their native abodes. In this case also we see the infinite goodness of God in providing the *Tree of Life*, the salubrious efficacy of which, we may presume, counteracted the dissolvent quality of the atmosphere, and preserved the body unhurt, amidst the opposite tendencies which encircled it. In this view we discover the perpetuity of the human body ensured on the most permanent basis, though composed of particles which belong to different elements, each of which had an innate tendency to seek its native abode. And at the same time we discover this assurance of perpetuity, while the body was surrounded with an atmosphere which penetrated its inmost recesses, and which perpetually tended to destroy the adhesion of those particles of which it was composed.

The eating of the fruit was the means through which its life-giving quality was to be communicated to man ; and as the power of eating implies action in the eater, it must of consequence imply the possession of life previously to all application made to this tree. The origin of life could therefore never be communicated to man through any efficacy which it could possess.

Neither could this tree be designed to restore life to those who had been deprived of it, because death could in this period have had no existence. And even if we allow that death had at that time begun its ravages, those who were the subjects of it must have been incapable of making that active application, which was necessary in order to their being benefitted by its salubrious efficacy.

Neither can we suppose that the design of this tree was to communicate to man the power to propagate future life, because this power had been previously communicated, independently of this tree. And in addition to this, we find that this power is still retained, though this tree has been placed beyond all human reach. In what light soever therefore we view this tree of life, our conclusions become ridiculous and absurd, unless we presume that it had the power to perpetuate that life, which had been previously communicated from God. It is therefore but reasonable to conclude, that the design of its efficacy was to counteract the dissolvent influence of the atmosphere, by which means the adhesion of the particles became permanent, and through which the human body, though com-

pounded of dissoluble parts, was preserved from dissolution and decay.

If this tree of life, whatever might have been its nature, had not possessed that invigorating quality, why was it denominated the Tree of Life? Why was it placed in the garden in the primeval state of man? Why was it removed when moral evil was introduced? And removed on this express account, *lest man put forth his hand, and take, and eat, and live for ever?* Is it that we are amused in the book of God with idle theories? Or can we suppose that the Father of mercies has sent us these accounts, to mock the creatures whom he had created, and that he has thus added deception to the miseries of human life? If conduct like this can be attributed to God, we are at a loss to know the essential properties of his nature, and are utterly unable to reconcile such actions with his exalted perfections. But if such conduct be not attributable to him, we then must attribute to the tree of life, a life-giving quality, and finally conclude that the efficacy of its fruit tended to ensure immortality to those bodies which in themselves were formed of dissoluble parts. In the following order therefore this branch of the divine economy presents itself to our view.

The human body which God created, was formed of parts; these parts had been taken from different elements, and included in their nature, a perpetual tendency towards their primitive abodes. To counteract this tendency which resided within the parts, an adhesive power was communicated,

through the efficacy of which, that tendency was arrested, and all separation of the parts from one another prevented from taking place.

But while this power of adhesion prevented the particles from separation, the atmosphere, which was necessary to the preservation of all animal life, possessing a dissolvent quality, naturally tended to destroy the adhesive power.

The destruction of the adhesive power, must have liberated every particle, while the native tendency of these particles must have urged them to seek and find their native abodes, through which the human body must have been destroyed.

Here are now before us two things to be subdued, in order to the perpetuity of human life; namely, the native tendency of the particles themselves, and the dissolvent influence of the atmosphere. To counteract the former, the power of adhesion which connected together the parts of the body was sufficient; but to counteract the latter required another cause, and this cause we find in the tree of life. The efficacy of this tree, appears to have been sufficient to repair the ravages which the atmosphere occasionally made; and to strengthen those powers of adhesion which the influence of the atmosphere tended to destroy. Through these means, the parts, of which the human body was composed, though possessing in themselves a tendency to separate, were preserved from dissolution; and the body which these parts composed was placed beyond the influence of decay. Such, therefore, was

perhaps the primitive state of things. And while this tree of life continued its interposing influence, it must have effectually prevented the ultimate accomplishment of that tendency which resided in the parts, by counteracting that influence which the atmosphere exercised over the adhesive power, which connected the particles of which the body was composed.

Nor is this merely inventing a theory to serve the purposes of an hypothesis. Reason concurs with divine authority to give sanction to the sentiment; *the tree of life* was planted in the garden, and freedom was given Adam to partake of its fruit; it was only removed from him after he had fallen from God, *lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever*. If therefore a theory more rational cannot be invented than that which the Bible affords, the hypothesis before us has a double claim upon our assent, namely, from the rationality of the facts themselves, and from the authority which these facts derive from revelation.

If B. when created, were compounded of materials taken partly from A. and partly from C. and if these particles which formed a contact in B. were to have in the aggregate an equal, or even an unequal tendency towards A. and C. from which they were first taken, it is demonstrably certain, that while the contact continued in B. no particle could depart either to A. or C.; under these circumstances it is undeniably certain, that the compounded

body B. must remain for ever. For as the tendencies of the particles in B. are supposed to be either equal or unequal, those particles which had been taken from C. will, in either case, prevent those which had been taken from A. from separately returning to their native abode at A. and the result will be exactly the same if we reverse the case. But if, through any external cause, the adhesion or contact in B. should be destroyed, each particle would be at liberty to retire to its respective element, through its native tendency ; and in this case the compounded body B. would be no more. Hence then it plainly follows, that though we consider B. to be a compounded body, and though the particles which compose it have tendencies to other abodes, yet, while these tendencies are counteracted, and the contact preserved, the compounded body must be indissoluble, and consequently immortal.

Now this comparison, even if partial in its application, will sufficiently prove the point for which it has been adduced. The human body is the compound in question, and this illustrative argument will prove, that while the power of adhesion continues perfect and entire, though the particles of which it was composed, may have distinct tendencies to depart to their respective elements, yet, while the power of adhesion remains, these distinct tendencies would be overcome, and the compounded body will be precisely the same as though no such tendency had inhered in any of the particles of which it was composed.

To destroy that adhesion which united the different parts of the human body together, the atmosphere had undoubtedly a power ; and if nothing had been created to counteract its efficacy, no doubt that it must eventually have been dissolved. But to suppose the dissolution of the human body to take place, either through the defect of its own nature, or through an adverse principle in any external cause, while we admit moral evil to be unknown, is to impeach the moral justice of God.

The justice of God could only engage him to prevent death from taking place, the ways and manners must be left to his disposal. He might have created an atmosphere without including within it any noxious qualities, or he might have given such qualities to it and have counteracted their efficacy, without implicating the principles of eternal justice. He might also have formed the body of particles which had no tendencies contrary to one another ; or have formed it from those which had an opposite, and have provided for the safety of the body through the medium of some cement which should unite the whole together, without being chargeable with mutability, and without being unjust. These, or a variety of other ways, all equally within the reach of infinite power, the Almighty might have selected, as infinite wisdom might have directed his choice.

But in the midst of these possible theories, we find that he chose to create the human body, under circumstances apparently the least favourable to its continuance, while he provided for its perpetuity on the most immoveable basis. He compounded it of

particles of opposite tendencies, which had been selected from distant elements ; and then placed this body under the influence of an atmosphere, capable of dissolving the adhesion through which the different particles which composed it, adhered together. Yet, even under these circumstances, he provided for its safety by the *tree of life*, the salubrity of which not only counteracted the influence of the atmosphere, but protected the adhesive power which preserved the particles, and renewed the body in perpetual vigour.

Thus then we find, that what tendency soever to dissolution may be presumed to reside in all compounded bodies, Infinite wisdom had wisely provided for the immortality of man, in the primeval state of things, by an efficacy which must have overcome, and risen superior to those circumstances on which the objection which we have been examining rests. The tree of life must have placed the human body at a distance which must for ever have prevented the approaches of death, and have ensured to it that immortality which is lost, and can only be attained, when the sea and the grave shall finally restore their dead.

And hence also, on a review of those principles which we have surveyed, the following inferences and conclusions rise before us. While moral evil is presumed to have no existence, no other reason can arise in any subsequent period of duration, why the body should be destroyed, than what must have existed antecedently to its actual creation ; for where any given created being continues morally and phy-

sically the same, no change whatever can be presumed to have taken place ; and certain it is, that no new moral obligation can be presumed to originate in a being that is absolutely perfect, and immutable in all his ways. And if we admit the same moral causes to have been in existence at the primary formation of man, through the active operation of which the human body has been since destroyed, we shall feel ourselves utterly unable to vindicate the divine justice in the creating of man. For if God be under a moral obligation to destroy the human body, and this obligation arises from the nature of moral justice, (and without this divine goodness must have forbidden the event,) this obligation must have existed from eternity ; God must therefore have been under a moral obligation to destroy the body, even in that identical moment in which he called it into being from the dust of the earth. And to suppose God to have chosen to create a body, which he, in that very moment must have been under an obligation to destroy, is to make the choice of God to operate in hostility to moral justice ; and that choice which thus operates in hostility to moral justice, must in itself be unjust. But to suppose the fountain head of all justice and perfection to be actuated by a choice which is repugnant to all that is just and perfect, will involve some palpable contradictions ; and therefore this choice cannot be applied to God.

But if, on the contrary, no such obligation did exist in God, and no moral cause of destruction could have existed in man, either when he was

created or in any subsequent period, while he preserved his rectitude and innocence; and since all *natural* tendencies to dissolution, and *natural* causes of destruction, are presumed to be counter-acted, it becomes a subject of further inquiry to know whence this moral obligation has arisen. Whatever the cause may be, of this truth we are satisfactorily assured, that it could not have existed in the original state of things, but that it must date its commencement from some subsequent period. And of this we may also be convinced, that to this cause we must attribute all the inroads which have been made on the creation of God, in all its parts, as well as that final dissolution which the human body is destined to undergo.

We may, nevertheless presume with confidence, that as this cause of calamity is but an intruder into the fair empire of creation, when it shall be done away, and be completely banished from the world, then a renovation of all nature shall take place; then, things shall be recalled back to their primeval stations, and death itself shall be no more. Then, moral evil, and those natural effects which have been produced by its innovations, shall cease for ever, and the original energies which called creation into actual existence, re-assuming their stations, shall continue without obstruction to operate through eternity. ♪

CHAPTER II.

ON THE INTRODUCTION OF MORAL EVIL, AND ITS
INFLUENCES ON THE HUMAN BODY ; AND ON
THE REMOVAL OF THE TREE OF LIFE.

FROM the various arguments which have been adduced in the preceding Sections, I conceive that it will be admitted, that a finite being which had been created in a state of moral rectitude, and which God at the moment in which it was created was under no moral obligation to destroy, could not have created that moral obligation, while its nature and tendencies remained the same, and while it continued in the same state in which it was created. And as God, from the immutability of his nature, must be incapable of those imperfections which are implied in such a change as we must suppose, no cause could originate with him, while the creature preserved its primitive state. For since the existence of the human body must have added to the felicities of life, it appears impossible to conceive that God should destroy this body, without diminishing that portion of happiness which his goodness had originally given ; and which, in this view, he must have made to depend upon the preservation of the material part of man. If, therefore, to suppose that God can, without any adequate

cause, destroy any portion of that felicity which originated in his goodness, be to place his goodness in opposition to itself, which will amount to a contradiction; it follows with decisive evidence, that if moral evil had never entered into the world, the human body, as well as the human soul, must have been immortal. Thus far, the ground appears clear; thus far, no obligation to destroy man, nor any cause of dissolution has made its appearance, either on the part of God or man; and thus far, immortality appears to be inseparable from the primitive state.

But in the midst of this plausibility of theory, we find that all the arguments which have been adduced are placed in direct opposition to fact. The world is constantly falling to pieces round about us, and human bodies are hourly peopling the abodes of death. Generation succeeds to generation, and man to man; and, in a few more years, it will be forgotten by our posterity that we were ever born. Hence then we are assured, that the arguments advanced must apply to another state of things; a state that existed before either moral evil or death had made its entry into the territories and habitation of man. And hence also we learn, that some important change must have taken place in the state of man, to produce those disastrous effects which constantly appear in these terrestrial regions.

No change can take place in a being that is immutable; the changes which have entered into existence must, therefore, reside in man; and no cause appears capable of producing those changes which

we discover, but *moral evil*. It is to moral evil, therefore, that we must look for all the disasters and calamities which afflict and embitter life; and to this cause we must attribute the final dissolution of the human body, as well as its state of captivity in the empire of death.

But for moral evil, death could have had no existence, because it is the reward of sin; the Eden of our ancestors would have been our lot, for a season, which we are now unable to comprehend, till, perhaps, by the appointment of God, we might have been translated into another region, where probation, peccability, and contingencies, would have been alike unknown.

We are now called to survey a scene, which presents us with causes, obligations, and consequences, totally distinct from those which, in the preceding Sections, have occupied our thoughts. In those, we have contemplated the primitive and immortal state of man; and in this, we must behold the entrance of moral evil into the world, and view the fatal influence which it has extended over the human body; the former we discover in theory, but the latter we must experience in awful fact.

What the nature of moral evil is in the abstract, probably, in the present state, we shall never know; it is, however, well known in its effects and consequences; and from hence we learn, that it is and must be exactly the reverse of God. That it had a beginning has been already proved; and that it has corrupted and debased human nature, is too

plain to require any evidence. When we take a survey of moral evil, and contemplate human nature, it appears mysterious that it should be capable of extending influences over the material part of man. Accustomed as we have been to behold matter operating through the medium of matter, it is not without some difficulty, that we can divest our minds of those local prejudices which are connected with our habits of reflection.

There are, however, appearances in the creation, which, though capable of demonstration, are equally removed from popular observation, and, abstractedly from those modes of proof of which they are susceptible, would equally lay an embargo on all belief. And were the immediate influence of moral evil on the material part of man, placed as much within the reach of demonstration, as those singular appearances which the more visible parts of creation afford, improbability in appearance would never be considered as an argument against fact, nor would it operate as an obstacle against our belief.

That spirit is capable of operating upon matter, will hardly admit of a moment's doubt, it being supported by the most unquestionable evidence, that of sensible proof. For if all primary motion in the material world has been impressed upon matter by some foreign impulse, it is evident that it must have originated in a source distinct from, and independent of matter; and, therefore, to a being which is purely spiritual, we must look for the origin of

that motion which is so visible to our senses and intellectual powers. If then all motion which we perceive in matter must primarily have originated in spirit, it must undeniably follow, that spirit must have modes of communicating its impulses to matter, though these modes are too obscure for our comprehension.

That there is within us a spiritual substance is a point which I shall assume without attempting to prove, and that there is an intimate connection between this spiritual substance, and the material part of man, is evident from the whole course of human actions.* But how this connection is formed, how any influence is communicated, and by what secret ties the union is preserved, are points which, in the present state of being, perhaps we shall never know. The immaterial principle which resides within us, is, without all doubt, capable of influencing and operating upon our bodies, but to what points this influence and operation extend, or where those lines are drawn, beyond the boundaries of which they cannot pass, are subjects which elude our deepest researches.

Most men are willing to allow that this influence shall extend to those cases in which we can trace the connection, and here we are apt to presume that all influence must end. But certain it is, that we have no more right to say to the influence of spirit over matter, thus far shalt thou come but no further, than others have to deny this influence altogether,

* See my Essay on the Immateriality and Immortality of the Human Soul.

because they can trace out no connection between the two substances. The inability of one man to comprehend how this influence should extend beyond the boundaries of his comprehension, can no more be admitted as an argument, that the influence must terminate there, than the inability of another to comprehend this influence, in any possible case whatever, can be admitted as an argument against its existence. In both of these cases, the extent of human comprehension is unjustly made the boundary of the influence of spirit. In the latter case, we have a decisive proof that the decision is erroneous, and we have but little reason more to believe that the former is free from error. The plain truth seems to be, that our comprehension of any given fact, can never prescribe boundaries to it; the fact itself must be admitted to exist independently of human knowledge; and, therefore, the influence of spirit must be allowed to operate in those regions where the human understanding cannot possibly enter. The hopes and fears, the joys and griefs, the pains and pleasures of the present life, will, in a thousand cases, prove the fact, because we must admit their existence, and they can be traced to no other source; and with the influences which are thus extended through natural life, must be connected the influence of those causes which produce both moral and immoral actions.

That moral evil has in itself a positive and independent existence, I believe no one will affirm; it therefore can have no more than a relative being, and can exist no longer than those beings continue to

exist, which are capable of *moral actions*. For if all moral agents were at once destroyed, it would be an absurdity too gross to be imposed upon the mind of man, to suppose that in this case moral evil could have any kind of existence. As therefore moral evil has not in itself any kind of positive existence, we must look to moral agents for all the being which it can possibly possess. And although moral evil is, in a moral point of view, nothing more than *the sinful thoughts and actions of a moral agent, physically capable of a better conduct*, yet so far can it extend its fatal influence in its effects and consequences, as to derange the whole human system, separate soul and body, decompose our whole corporeal frame, and finally lodge our material parts in the house appointed for all living, in which state they must continue until the arrival of that period, in which God shall accomplish those promises which he has made to restore human nature from the grave.

That moral evil must be incapable of annihilating any part of the substance of man, must be evident from this consideration, *moral evil is not God*. And certain it is, that nothing less than infinite, can cause that which is matter to become no matter, or cause that which is spirit to cease to be spirit; for in these two substances the whole of man consists. Moral evil, therefore, whatever may be its nature, cannot annihilate any substance. And as moral evil is incapable of annihilating any substance, so, by the same reasoning, it will appear equally ab-

surd for us to suppose that death possesses any such power. For as death is the offspring of moral evil, and since nothing can communicate what it has not, it will involve a contradiction to suppose, that moral evil has communicated to death an annihilating power which it did not possess itself. It therefore follows, that neither moral evil nor death can possibly annihilate any substance, because neither the former nor the latter is infinite; and certain it is, that nothing less than infinite can destroy any given substance, which nothing less than infinite could create.

But how impossible soever it may appear, that death should annihilate any given substance, yet, when we apply its influences to compounded bodies, the whole scene assumes a different aspect. The composition of a being is not the substance of that being; nay, the composition may be totally destroyed, while the component parts remain uninjured and entire. The influence of moral evil may, therefore, extend to the composition of the body, without affecting the substance of it. Thus death may destroy the modification of the body, while the parts themselves remain immoveable in their own natures, beyond the reach of injury and decay. The same power, which moral evil has to destroy the intimate connection between soul and body, must be equally capable of dissolving the constituent parts, of which our bodies are composed. And by secretly operating, in its natural effects, upon the whole mass, it may destroy the adhesion of the parts, and finally reduce to its primitive state, that

body which was originally formed from the dust of the earth. But these changes can only affect the modification of body, and the arrangement of its constituent parts. The substance itself is not affected by these changes; it must still continue to retain the identity of its nature, and exist at an infinite distance from the reach of death.

It may, perhaps, be said, that, "since moral evil has only a relative existence, we can have no conception how it can produce those effects which shall finally terminate in the separation of the component parts of the body." That we cannot comprehend the physical manner of its operation, I most readily admit. Neither, I must contend, can we comprehend how these parts were previously united which death dissolves; nor do we know how moral evil can accomplish that separation which takes place between body and soul. We know not, indeed, how moral evil could extend its influence over the immaterial part, so as to contaminate and debase it; nor can we know why it should be capable of alienating the soul from God, any more than we can comprehend why it should expose our bodies to disease and affliction in time, and our souls to endless misery beyond the grave. In all these cases, the facts themselves are unquestionably certain; while the modes of action are incomprehensible, and the physical process in each case seems to be alike unknown.

But, since from the most decisive reasonings, and most unquestionable authority; since from that

knowledge which we have of the nature and attributes of God; of the primeval state of man, and of the analogy of nature; it must be admitted, that death could originally have had no existence in the works of God; we are furnished with every proof which the nature of the subject can admit, that death, which is a natural evil, is an effect which can result from no other cause than moral evil; and to attribute, either death, or that consequent dissolution which the body undergoes, to any other, is to break down all distinctions between right and wrong, between good and evil, and to darken with impenetrable shadows every principle of moral justice. Thus then, since no other cause can be presumed to exist, except *moral evil*, to which we can, consistently with justice and truth, attribute the alienation of the soul from God, its contamination with guilt, its separation from the body, and finally the disunion of all the bodily parts; the fact presses itself upon us with an evidence more imperious than mere probability can afford; and we have all the assurance, which the subject can encourage us to expect, that *moral evil* is the cause of death.

It was admitted in the preceding Section, that, since matter has been divided into those elements with which we are encircled; all particles taken from either, have in themselves a native tendency to repair or fill up their respective abodes. It was also admitted, that the body of Adam had been composed of matter after being thus divided; and at the same time it was contended, that an adhesive power lodged in the compounded body, preserved

its equilibrium, and counteracted that innate tendency which the parts of all compounded bodies possess. But the atmosphere, it was presumed, by its dissolvent qualities, tended to destroy that adhesive power, which had been deemed so necessary to the preservation of the human body ; because this body had been compounded of parts. This circumstance conducted us to the *tree of life*, which God had planted in the terrestrial paradise ; the fruit of which, man, after he had violated the command of his Creator, was forbidden to taste, lest, by eating, he *should live for ever*. And hence the conclusion became inevitable ; namely, that Almighty Power selected this tree of life as an instrumental medium, through which he secured the immortality of that body, which, by being formed of parts, had a natural tendency to dissolution.

Now, since this sacred tree has been planted in the garden of Eden, and was continued there until moral evil entered into the world ; and was placed beyond the reach of man as soon as he had transgressed the commands of God ; the dissolution of the human body became an inevitable consequence of its removal. For, since all the atoms of compounded bodies are removed from their primitive elements, while they hold their stations in the body modified ; they can only remain in their peculiarly modified state, through that power of adhesion which connects the parts. The instant, therefore, that this adhesive power relaxes in its energy, the natural tendency of the particles begins to act ; and in proportion as this adhesive power becomes weakened,

progressive dissolution prevails, till the adhesive power being entirely destroyed, consigns over the compounded body to that complete dissolution which is consequent on death.

The removal of the *tree of life* must, without all doubt, have been an act of God, in which nothing besides could have been the *efficient cause*. But, although God, by his own will and power, placed this tree beyond the reach of man, the moral cause of that exertion of power must have been *moral evil*. And, by thus admitting moral evil to have so altered the state of things, as to cause that exertion of the divine power to remove the tree of life, we may make moral evil to be the primary cause of the dissolution of the body, without even obliging ourselves to admit the necessity of moral evil, immediately acting upon it, to produce that effect which we behold.

But, even admitting that "if moral evil be the cause of dissolution, it must have an immediate action upon the body," as some contend; I am so far from conceiving that the remark contains any insuperable difficulty, since the whole analogy of nature appears to furnish us with instances, in which the action of spirit influences matter, though the manner of its operations are totally unknown. If, therefore, the action of spirit influence matter in the ordinary course of nature, there surely can be nothing irrational in presuming, that moral evil may so far extend its influence to man, as to dissolve the whole of our corporeal frame.

If spirit operates upon matter, which is visible from the whole course of human actions, it must be

by some kind of motion or modification of action, there being no other way in which we can conceive the fact to be possible. Now, it is not the vice or the virtue of any given action in which the power of actuation resides ; but in the action itself, abstractedly considered, with which vice and virtue have little or no connection. It is true, that all moral actions must partake either of vice or virtue ; and the effects which they produce will be perfectly analogous to their nature ; but since it is the action itself of which we speak, in its relation to its cause, the object must be physically the same, whether it partake of vice or virtue, or be perfectly indifferent to both. For, though moral evil be nothing more, in itself, than the action of spirit unrighteously directed, yet still it is in itself as much an action, as if neither vice nor virtue had ever applied to moral agents. Thus then, even admitting moral evil to extend its influence immediately to the human body, we feel no more difficulty in accounting for its dissolution, than in accounting for those various actions which mark human life. And it becomes perfectly comprehensible, without obliging us to have recourse to that miraculous power, to which, abstractedly from moral evil, we should be obliged to appeal.

But, when, from this view of the immediate influence of moral evil operating upon our bodies, we turn our thoughts to that medium through which God has thought proper to act, namely, by the removal of the tree of life, the case assumes a more unquestionable aspect. Here we view the final dissolution of the human body, as the necessary result

of things in the present state of the world ; and the evidence which supported the fact presses itself upon us with an energy which can hardly fail to produce conviction.

It may indeed be said, that “ by introducing the removal of the tree of life, as the cause of our dissolution, we give a discharge to moral evil ;” but this objection must surely be founded in mistake. It has been already proved, that God is unchangeable in all his ways ; and, as all possible perfection is essential to his nature, he must have an invariable attachment to purity, and an invariable aversion from vice of every kind. He placed the tree of life in the garden for the preservation of *holy beings*, but for no other. But, as in the instant when moral evil entered into the world, holiness departed from human nature ; so, consequently, the beings whom God had promised to support were no where to be found.

If, then, the tree of life had been permitted to continue, after primeval rectitude had departed from man, God must have been mutable, in suffering this tree to be applied to purposes to which his promises did not extend. And this mutability, in his actions, must have annihilated an essential property of his nature, while it must have added to the calamities of life, by perpetuating the miseries of man. The perpetuity of being in a state checquered with good and evil, must have perpetuated evil as well as good ; and that action which perpetuates evil, when with justice it can be omitted, must be too nearly allied to injustice to be applicable to God.

Perhaps the atmosphere which we now respire, and that food from which we derive our daily nourishment, while they invigorate for a moment, have within them a latent power to injure and destroy our frame, and unite in contributing towards the dissolution of that body, which they now nourish and support. But, when the present state of things shall be swept aside ; when a new æra shall commence, when the face of nature shall be renovated, and the human body restored from the grave, shall inherit another, and more favourable clime ; then shall we be removed from these impediments, and placed beyond the reach of these “injurious assistances,” which we now derive from respiration and food, our bodies will feel no internal tendencies to dissolution ; and, by being removed from all external causes of decay, the parts of which they will be composed shall adhere for ever.

Whether, in the earliest stage of human existence, the atmosphere and food of which we speak, were precisely the same as they are now, or whether they have undergone a change, are points not for me to decide. It seems most probable, that, like other parts of degenerated nature, they have sustained some injury ; and the atmosphere, like the earth, may have been *cursed for the sake of man*. It, however, still retains a small portion of its primitive salubrity ; and that portion which it possesses may lead us to conjecture what its state must have been in those happy days, when moral evil was unknown. Its influences at present seem alike extended to all the visible parts of the creation with which we are

acquainted ; so that few things can ultimately resist it, any more than they can survive the ravages of time. The life of man is now reduced to little more than half a century, beyond which not all the efficacy of medical art can make human nature to survive, ✕ our bodies then retire into those peaceful mansions, where they insensibly realize these changes, and undergo these operations which now only engross our thoughts. ✕

It may, perhaps, be asserted, that “ if all the parts of compounded bodies have a natural tendency to seek their elementary abodes ; and, if those bodies will be thus compounded which shall survive the grave, we can have no satisfactory assurance that they shall not hereafter be exposed to dissolution and decay.” In reply to this objection, I observe, we have no reason to believe that this tendency to dissolution which is now found in bodies, compounded of different elements, will exist beyond the grave. Whether, indeed, those elements into which all matter is now divided, and of which our present and future bodies are, and will be composed, and through which this tendency has been called into existence, will survive hereafter, or be ultimately resolved into their original principles, I take not upon me to say ; but, in either case, it will not follow that this tendency shall subsist in a future state.

If, in a future state, those elements into which matter is now divided, be resolved into their original principles, it will clearly follow, that the tendency to dissolution, which now exists in compounded bodies, and which results from their distinct exist-

ence, must necessarily disappear ; in consequence of which, the body, though compounded of parts, will be capable of supporting itself without external aid. For, in this case, the distinct atoms, having no distinct centres to which they shall respectively tend, must continue to preserve those stations in which, at the resurrection, they shall be fixed.

The distinct elements, into which matter is now divided, have probably been thus divided for purposes subservient to creation, as we well know that this division is essentially necessary to man in his present terrestrial condition ; and consequently, these divisions may have no existence in any other state. For, when this condition of man shall be done away, and the present state of creation shall be no more, the elements may subside with the occasion of their being. And, should they be lost in one general form of indiscriminate matter, it plainly follows, that all propensity to dissolution must be forever excluded, even from compounded bodies, and totally done away.

There can be no doubt that our future bodies will be formed of matter, and of that matter which now forms their essential parts. But, though the matter itself shall be retained, the elementary divisions may nevertheless be totally abolished, and may mingle in one common mass, for which we want a name. And, since matter in its remote and primitive state, while undivided into elements, could have had no tendency to dissolution, whatever the peculiarity of the modification of any portion thereof might have been ; so we may reasonably infer, that

the body, which shall survive the grave, though composed of separable parts, if constituted in a similar manner, must be unaffected by all external impulses, and, consequently, must continue for ever. And, therefore, the mere compound of any given body, under these circumstances, cannot in itself be adduced as an argument against the perpetuity of its being, when matter itself shall be divested of those tendencies, which must have originated either in a peculiarity of local circumstances, or in external causes, which must be destroyed. And, hence it follows also, that all those arguments which may be drawn from the compounded state of our future bodies, to invalidate our belief in their immortality, must necessarily appear fallacious.

In addition to the circumstances, which have been stated in the preceding paragraphs, the following remarks ought not to be omitted. The adhesive parts of any compounded body, which is purely material, which our future bodies must be, are as much matter as the parts which are cemented by this adhesion. And we have no more reason to believe, that a tendency to dissolution can reside in the adhesive particles, than in those which are presumed to be more solid and compact; and, therefore, an adhesive particle, placed in an adhesive state, must preserve its station as much so as one that is supported by that adhesion. For, where any given portion of matter, which is in itself perfectly inert, is removed from all external influence and impulse, it cannot possibly have any tendency to remove from that station in which it was first

placed. It must preserve its native inertness the moment after it was created, it must be the same the moment following, and consequently must continue in that state for ever. The removal of all external impulses and influence must place particles, which are inert, beyond the reach of change; and the same action, which established their first condition, must continue to make that condition permanent; and, under these circumstances, they must retain their adhesive properties and established situations for ever.

Thus far the argument will hold good, if we presume that all matter is alike indifferent to motion and rest. But if, on the contrary, we presume that all matter possesses a certain power, by which it resists all change of place, as many have strongly contended, it will be considerably strengthened and confirmed. For, if all matter be capable of resisting more or less all changes of situation, then nothing but external impulse can remove any given particle from its station; and such must be the nature of that impulse, that it must be capable of overcoming that resistance which the given portion of matter makes in proportion to its magnitude or solid contents. What the precise quantity, or numerical particles of matter may be, of which our future bodies shall be composed, is a question foreign to the present inquiry. For certain it is, that neither specific quantity, nor numerical identity, can affect the abstract nature of compounded bodies. But, admitting the principles to be genuine on which I have proceeded, namely, that all matter shall be re-

duced to its original state; then, when *the elements shall melt with fervent heat*, the atmosphere must be destroyed; then each particle shall preserve its station in our future bodies, and all the parts, of which they shall be composed, will adhere indissolubly for ever.

Hitherto, we have surveyed but one side of the case which was supposed. We have thus far presumed in that future state, which we shall inherit, that particles taken from different elements will no longer seek distinct abodes; but that, equally fixed in their respective stations, each particle shall be at rest; and that having no tendency to wander from its station, in which it has been placed, the parts of our future bodies must adhere to each other through eternity. Such are the consequences which will result, upon a presumption that the discrimination of elements shall be done away.

But if, on the contrary, we presume that this discrimination of elements shall not be totally abolished, as we have presumed; and that they shall not be blended together, as in the original state of things, before they had their distinct natures assigned them; yet we cannot avoid concluding, that, so far shall the face of things be changed, that they shall be deprived of their hostile influence towards one another, and happily concur in one harmonious operation. Those bodies, which have slept for ages in the dust of the earth, awakened by the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, while the world and all its appendages are consumed with devouring fire, will undoubtedly retire beyond the reach of the

general conflagration, and, entering immediately into their eternal states, will live in regions where the atmosphere can extend no influence, and where gravitation can never reach.

The destruction of the world by fire must annihilate that common centre to which our bodies now adhere, and constantly tend; and, consequently, gravitation must necessarily be destroyed. This circumstance must counteract the tendency, which the grosser particles might have to cleave to their terrestrial confine, even though the atmosphere should remain, and though, in point of space, the renovated body shall be lodged within the sphere of its present attractive influence. But these points will rise into consideration in some subsequent Chapter, and to that Chapter we must refer for the discussion. It is sufficient in the present case, that we have seen the introduction of moral evil into the world, together with its effects and consequences; and, that through the removal of the *tree of life*, death has been entailed on all of woman born. Thus, *by the disobedience of one man sin has entered into the world, and death by sin*, and thus has *death passed upon all men, because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*; and hence we are assured that *the wages of sin is death*.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE ANNIHILATION OF MORAL EVIL, CONSIDERED SEPARATELY, AND IN CONNECTION WITH ITS CAUSES, EFFECTS, AND CONSEQUENCES. THE RESULT HIGHLY FAVOURABLE TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE HUMAN BODY FROM THE GRAVE.

SECTION I.

If Moral Evil shall be annihilated, the Resurrection of the Human Body may be presumed to be a necessary Effect.

WHEN we turn from those subjects, which have engrossed our thoughts in the preceding parts of this work to the annihilation of moral evil, and to those effects which must result therefrom, the mind is presented with a scene which is totally distinct, in its nature, from those which we have hitherto surveyed, and we enter upon a mode of argumentation which is entirely new.

In the foregoing parts we have seen the primeval state of man, and we have contemplated the fatal effects which have resulted from the introduction of moral evil into the world. We have also seen, that had it not been for moral evil, death would have been unknown, together with those natural effects which follow upon the body, when in a state of

separation from the soul. And it is evident from those views which we have taken of the whole subject in general, and from those proofs which have been adduced in favour of the facts; that in what light soever death may be surveyed, it can only be considered as acting in subordination to moral evil. And therefore, moral evil must be considered by us, as the primary cause of all the degradation, which human nature in this probationary state of exile, is destined to undergo.

That the human soul must survive the grave, is a truth which is generally admitted, and may be proved; it must therefore exist in a state of consciousness throughout eternity. The sensations, to which we must submit hereafter, must be either pleasant or painful; for, into no other forms can consciousness be resolved. This therefore brings immediately to our view a state of future punishments and rewards.

To investigate the nature of those punishments and rewards, which await the guilty and the righteous, when this life shall be lost and swallowed up in another; is remote from my design. The evidences which must support these facts may be drawn from the nature and attributes of God, when considered in connexion with vice and virtue; so that the moral attributes of the Deity co-operate with his immutability, to ensure a state of retribution in another life. It will be sufficient for my present purpose, to presume that a state of felicity awaits the souls of the righteous, and from this ground will arise some im-

portant evidence, that all moral evil must be done away from the human soul, before it can possibly inherit the kingdom of God.

There are few abstract truths, which will admit of more satisfactory evidence than this, that two natural extremes cannot possibly meet together. The terms themselves presume a situation, which never can be overcome; and even if it were allowed possible that a union could be accomplished, they would be no longer those extremes which are presumed by the supposition. In short, the feelings of human nature, are strong indications in favour of a future state; and the vices which go unpunished, and the virtues which go unrewarded here, are powerful arguments to prove it sure. The hopes and fears which inhabit the human bosom, plainly point to distinct abodes; and ensure those rewards and punishments, which are strictly analogous to virtue and vice, and to the total sum and aggregate nature of human actions here below.

Whatever the abstract nature of that happiness may be, which we hope to enjoy beyond the grave, it is certain that it must be derived from God; his perfections being the only fountain of excellence to which all created beings must apply; for equally certain it is, that *in him we live, and move, and have our being*. And since God, from his exalted and immutable perfections can communicate that only, which is congenial to his nature, we cannot avoid concluding, that there must be an agreement between him who confers, and the object which receives the felicity conferred. For, since the felicity

which is conferred by God must be perfectly consistent with his nature ; it can only find repose in that bosom which has received the impression of the divine image. Without this likeness, there can be no union ; where there is no union, there can be no concord ; and where there is no concord, there must be infelicity and woe.

But, since God is and must be necessarily devoid of all moral evil ; and, since man in his present condition is under its influence and dominion ; the consequence is inevitable, that an agreement under these circumstances can have no existence. It must therefore follow, that either God or man must change in nature, before they can possibly meet together. For, certain it is, that those gratifications which are pleasing to man, in his present state, are such as God cannot possibly bestow, through the holiness and perfections of his nature ; while it is equally certain, that even the glories of heaven can communicate no felicity to man, through the corruptions and depravity which reign in the human heart. And hence the necessity of a radical change before man can derive felicity from God.

Now, since God is both immutable and perfect, it is evident that he can neither change, nor include moral evil in his nature ; and, since heaven is a place of happiness, to which the souls of the righteous shall be admitted ; and since felicity, under existing circumstances, cannot be communicated ; the inevitable consequence is, that man must undergo a change. As therefore moral evil is that, which

has sunk man beneath his primitive rank in the scale of created excellency; separated him from God, and thereby rendered him unfit for that felicity which he hopes to enjoy hereafter; so, the removal of moral evil must restore him to his primitive dignity and native grandeur; and render him meet to be a partaker of that felicity, which the Almighty will confer in a future world. Hence then the certainty of future rewards demonstrates the necessity and certainty, that, *from those who are admitted to glory, all moral evil must be done away.*

If man, under the influence of moral evil, with all his passions and propensities unsubdued, were to be admitted into heaven, even heaven itself could confer upon him no felicity.

“The mind is its own place, and of itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.”

For, as an agreement between the giver of happiness, and the receiver of it, must be necessary in order to its pure enjoyment; a previous qualification must be admitted, and must be attained. But, as the influence of moral evil, is, under this consideration, presumed to be retained, no such qualification can be possessed; and consequently, no felicity can be enjoyed. As therefore, felicity is to be communicated in that celestial region, the necessary qualification for its possession must be obtained; and as this cannot be where moral evil holds dominion, the plain consequence is that *moral evil must be done away.*

Man, in no station or mode of existence, can enjoy felicities which he has no appetites to relish. Neither, can the angry, the hostile and jarring dispositions, of human nature, obtain indulgence from such objects as heaven with all its glories can afford. For, could we conceive, that these unholy dispositions could receive gratification in the abodes of bliss; we must conceive that the most distant extremes must blend together; —a supposition as repugnant to our reason, as the possibility of confounding the north and south poles of the globe. As therefore, the felicities of heaven can never be enjoyed where moral evil holds dominion, because they are extremes which can never meet together; and, as felicity must be communicated to those who shall inherit heaven; it evidently follows, that moral evil must be annihilated in the human soul, before it can inherit the kingdom of God.

If heaven, under circumstances which have been presumed, can yield felicity to man; it must afford the means of intoxication to the intemperate, wealth to the miser, and licentious pleasures to the debauchee; it must afford fields of blood to the warrior, visionary aggrandisement to the ambitious, and hold out scenes of temptation to the plunderers of mankind; it must even gratify the most brutal and savage dispositions of human nature. Under such views, what are we to think of its constitution? Wherein can it differ from this Aceldama, this “bedlam of the universe” which we inhabit? How in such a case, and in such a region, can virtue be

rewarded ! Even the vices which dishonour human nature, must be presumed to hold eternal triumph ; and the prospect of impunity, must, even here below, tend to sanction, and even dignify those actions which disgrace mankind.

However absurd these sentiments may appear, such must be the state of heaven ; if moral evil can be permitted to enter ; so that even the grossness of these inferences becomes an evidence in favour of the general conclusion. For, as such scenes as we have inferred, cannot possibly exist in heaven ; since virtue must be rewarded there, and since nothing unholy, nothing unclean, nothing that either loveth or maketh a lie, can enter there ; we are fully assured, that moral evil cannot inherit those abodes. The plain and inevitable consequence therefore is, that *moral evil must be destroyed and done away.*

It has been already proved, in the preceding parts of this volume, that the dissolution of the human body, the various calamities with which we are afflicted, together with all those natural evils which harass and torment mankind, have been occasioned by moral evil. And, from the proofs which have been adduced, we have concluded, that, if moral evil had not entered into the world, creation would have still retained its pristine state ; and consequently, that death itself, which is a natural evil, would have been totally unknown. It has also been proved, in the preceding parts of this section, that, as a future state of happiness awaits the souls of the righteous, when they depart this

life, in which they will be recompensed for all their sufferings here below ; those qualifications, which are necessary for that enjoyment, must be previously obtained. And since heaven is a state of purity, which can admit of no alloy, the necessity of those qualifications becomes conspicuous, and enforces the necessity that moral evil must be destroyed.

Can then, those natural effects, which originated in moral evil, which we have proved to be their primary cause, continue in existence when moral evil shall have been destroyed? Or, can any cause perpetuate natural evil besides that cause which primarily gave it birth. Surely these things appear impossible. For, if these effects can continue in existence, when that cause which produced them shall have been done away ; they must be effects and not effects, at the same time, which is a plain and palpable contradiction. For, as the cause of death and dissolution, is moral evil, and this cause in respect to all the righteous, must be done away ; it therefore follows, that if no natural effect can survive the cause which produced it, death and dissolution must cease, and the inevitable consequence is, that the human body must rise again from the grave.

That no cause but moral evil, could occasion death, has been already proved, and we can have no conception that the power, through which it produced these effects can be capable, either of transfer or delegation ; much less can we conceive that this power can be so bequeathed as to perpetuate these effects, when moral evil, with which alone it

originated, and from which it is inseparable, shall be totally destroyed. And were we even to presume it possible, that the power which perpetuates death could continue when moral evil is destroyed, moral evil could no longer be considered as its exclusive cause. But, since the reverse of this has been already proved ; and since a delegation of this power, is a supposition replete with absurdities ; the conclusion again returns upon us, that when moral evil shall be destroyed, all its natural effects must cease ; and consequently that a resurrection of the body must take place.

If death, and the dissolution of the human body, (which are effects evidently produced by moral evil) can remain in existence after moral evil shall have been destroyed, it will be impossible for us to say from what cause this *continuance* of these effects can flow. It cannot result from moral evil, because this is now destroyed by the supposition ; and the notion of a transfer of power to something else is too ridiculous even for serious refutation. And, since we can no more conceive that an effect can continue without a cause, than we can conceive it should have originated without cause ; and, since the cause in which the effect is presumed to have originated is destroyed, and no transfer of power can possibly take place, through which the *continuance* of this effect can be supported the *continuance* itself vanishes from our sight ; and the consequence is, a resurrection of the human body from the confines of death.

As the primary existence of the cause, was necessary to the primary production of the effect ; so,

the continuance of the cause must be necessary to the continuance of the effect. For, could we conceive that an effect could continue without an adequate cause; we must of necessity make a contradictory supposition; we must suppose it to be the continuance of an effect, and not the continuance of that effect at the same time, which is absolutely impossible. As therefore, a contradiction cannot be admitted, and as no effect can continue without an adequate cause; as the cause of death is moral evil, and this cause in all the righteous must be destroyed; the effect must discontinue by a natural consequence, through the destruction of the cause, and issue in an event, which we have already contemplated; namely, the resurrection of the human body from the grave.

That death is the effect of moral evil, has been already proved; and consequently, that dissolution which is more immediately produced by death, must be attributed to the same primary cause. If therefore, to presume that death can continue in existence when moral evil is destroyed be contradictory, to imagine that dissolution can survive the annihilation of death must be equally absurd, since, in either case we must suppose that an effect survives the cause on which it is dependent for its own existence. But, since these suppositions are contradictory; and impossible because contradictory; since the certainty of future rewards ensures the destruction of moral evil, and the destruction of moral evil ensures the annihilation of death; so the annihilation of death must ensure the annihilation of dissolution, and the annihilation of dis-

solution must cause human nature to rise from the abodes of death.

If dissolution continue after moral evil and death shall have been both destroyed, it is evident that it could not have been produced by either, because no natural effect can survive its cause. But, this conclusion is contrary to the proofs we have already adduced; and is perfectly irreconcilable to the immutability and moral justice of God. Hence then, the same conclusion returns again upon us, namely, that as moral evil is the parent of that death, by which dissolution is more immediately produced; so, the removal of moral evil must finally lead to the destruction of dissolution as well as of that of death, and ultimately terminate in a resurrection. For, since nothing but moral evil could possibly have brought death into the world; the removal of moral evil must necessarily extinguish those immediate and remote effects which ultimately depend upon it for their existence, and which can be supported in existence by no other cause.

It may, perhaps, to the reasoning which I have advanced be objected thus. "That if moral evil be the cause of death, and moral evil be removed from the righteous in the present life, no necessity can remain why death should ever take place." In answer to this objection, I reply, that though moral evil will be the cause of death, and though it be removed from the soul of every genuine Christian on this side eternity; yet death must necessarily take place, unless a miraculous interposition of divine power should invert the order of nature, and de-

stroy her laws, to prevent the fact. And my reasons for these assertions are comprised in the following paragraph.

It has been already admitted, that all bodies compounded of matter, since it has been divided into elements, have within them a natural tendency to decay. Such was, and such still is the material part of man. To prevent this effect from taking place, God placed in the garden of Eden, the *tree of life*, the efficacy of which counteracted that tendency which the parts of the human body possessed. And the removal of this tree, which took place immediately after the introduction of moral evil, annihilating the only preventative to our dissolution, left the component parts of our body to follow that tendency, which then was, and still is inseparable from all terrestrial bodies, compounded of different elements. Thus then, though moral evil shall be destroyed, the destruction of moral evil cannot restore *the tree of life*; and consequently, cannot prevent that inevitable consequence from taking place, which necessarily results in the present state of things from those elementary parts of which we are formed. But when the present state of things shall pass away, and this universe shall be dissolved, when those elements into which all matter is now divided, shall mingle in one common mass, and all nature shall undergo a grand revolution; then those local tendencies which now exist, shall either rest in the sphere of action for which they were created; or, having filled up the stations for which they were des-

tined, shall expire and be found no more. And hence, under present circumstances, death must take place upon all, even though moral evil should be done away.

The important question which we have now before us, is not whether death shall continue to add new victims to his gloomy shrine when moral evil shall be done away; but whether *even dissolution shall not be destroyed*. If the former only had been proposed for our decision, no proof would have been necessary; for, as nothing can act which is deprived of being, it is certain that the instant death is destroyed, nothing can afterward suffer from its power. But if death and the dissolution of soul and body, be in the abstract the same, the destruction of death must imply the destruction of dissolution, which is a distinct idea. In the former case, the merenegation of dying would be all that could be intended, which is not the point to be proved; but in the latter, if death and dissolution be the same, the annihilation of death must be the annihilation of dissolution. And, when that dissolution which is implied in death, shall be destroyed, the inevitable consequence must be the resurrection of the human body from the grave. But this topic will be pursued in a future section.

If either the immediate or remote effects of moral evil be supposed to continue for ever, in these subjects from which all moral evil is done away; I would ask upon what cause or causes do these effects depend for their existence? Every effect must

have a cause, not only to produce but to continue it ;— a cause which is adequate to its production and its continuance, and which must remain in union with the effect which it produced and which continues. Unless we admit those general propositions, the terms *cause* and *effect* become unintelligible ; and are devoid of meaning. But, as moral evil is the cause of death, and the primary cause of all those effects which are included in and result from it, whenever moral evil shall be done away, we behold the annihilation of the primary cause upon which death and all the consequences of death depend. And therefore, if we admit that the natural effects of moral evil continue after their primary cause shall have been totally destroyed, we at once break down all connection between cause and effect ; and by so doing we make an effect, which by its name we acknowledge to be dependent, to continue through eternity, while we suppose the cause which is dependent, to be perfectly annihilated.

Can any effect, I would ask, continue in existence without a cause ? This surely must be impossible. Can any thing result from a cause, which is admitted to be extinct ? This must be impossible as the other. Can any thing, which has in itself no independent existence, derive a continuance of existence from itself ? This cannot possibly be. In admitting the *first* of these cases, we must presume what we have denominated an effect, to be an effect and not an effect at the same time, which is a plain contradiction. In admitting the *second* case

we must presume that a cause can act after it is deprived of being, which is also a contradiction. And, in admitting the *third* case, we must ascribe independence to an effect, which from its name and nature, must be destitute of it; which is in effect denominating it to be independent, and not independent at the same time. Hence then conclude, that as nothing, in the *first place*, can be an effect without a cause, and in the *second*, that no cause can act when it is devoid of being, and that in the *third case* nothing can derive from itself an independence which it does not possess; no such case can possibly exist. And therefore, as the dissolution of the human body must be precisely in the situation of this effect, which under these circumstances can have no existence; it must necessarily cease through the destruction of moral evil, and the human body must be awakened from the sleep of death.

It is certain that no contact can exist between an effect which is in being, and a cause which is not. For, if such a contact can exist, then entity must depend upon nonentity for the continuance of its existence, which is self-evident absurdity. But, since no such contact can possibly exist, all dependence must, of necessity, be annihilated; and consequently, the door of immortality must be opened to the human body, though now mouldering in the tomb.

Whether the cause of our dissolution be death or moral evil, certain it is, that some cause must be

admitted ; and whether it be the former or the latter, while either continues in existence, we behold the dissolution of the human body, and the primary cause which produced it, in contact with each other. But, when death and moral evil are destroyed, unless the body rise again from the grave, we must suppose a change to take place in the condition of the dead, while their continuance in the grave will prove their condition to be precisely the same that it was before death and moral evil were destroyed. But, as it is impossible for any condition to be the same while it is different from what it was before, it will evidently follow, unless we admit a contradiction, that the dead must be restored to future life. But, this conclusion must finally depend upon the certainty that a contradiction must be the reverse.

The change which is presumed, arises from the distinction that must be between the *existence* and *extinction* of the cause of our dissolution. For, the state of any given being, whilst the cause of that state is in existence, can never be precisely the same, as when the cause of that state is totally destroyed. For as, while in contact with its cause, the state of this being must be an effect resulting immediately from that cause, so the total removal of this cause must make the state of this being cease from being an effect thus resulting ; and by its continuance in existence, while the cause on which it depended is no more, it must be presumed to have acquired an independence. The passing from de-

pendence to independence, must therefore amount to a positive change. But if, under these circumstances, the dead rise not, their continuing in a state of corruption, after the cause of that corruption shall have been done away, will prove their state to be precisely the same, as though the cause of that state were in actual existence. And, unless we admit a resurrection of the body, we shall be driven to the conclusion, that the removal of the cause of dissolution is no removal of it; and that the state of the dead has undergone a change, from dependence to independence, while it remains precisely the same; so that it must have undergone a change and not have undergone a change at the same time.

If the removal of the cause of any given effect, produce no change in the state of that effect, it must be the removal of the cause and the establishment of it at the same time, which is an evident contradiction; that removal, therefore, which produces no change, cannot be admitted. But if, in the case of the human body before us, the removal of the cause of dissolution produce a change, I would ask, in what does that change consist? It cannot be in the condition of the body, if the dead rise not; neither can it be in any change which the atoms can undergo. It cannot be in future hopes and fears, because a body devoid of life must be equally incapable of both. It cannot be in the dispersion of that gloom which hovers round their solitary mansion; for, to this the peaceable inhabitants are perfectly insen-

sible. It cannot be in any future destiny which awaits the body ; for, if the cause of dissolution had never been removed, the body could only continue insensible for ever ; and, if it rise not from the grave, the period of its destiny is precisely the same. Nothing therefore can be presumed, which can either increase the horrors of the grave, or meliorate the condition of the lifeless atoms. In fine, I can discover no change in the state of the human body, in consequence of the removal of the cause of its dissolution, unless we admit a resurrection from the grave ; but, on the contrary, unless we admit that change which the resurrection implies, the supposition involves in it this absurdity, that the state of the body is changed, and is not changed at the same time. As, therefore, this contradiction cannot be admitted into our reasonings ; some change in the state of the dead must be acknowledged. But as no change can be conceived, while the body continues mouldering in the tomb, the argument gives us all the evidence of moral certainty, that the human body must rise again from the grave.

That natural evil is either a *consequence* or an *effect* of that which is moral, is a point which is at once sanctioned by general consent and founded upon fact ; and few are to be found who will attempt to dispute its certainty. In the lists of natural evil, death must be allowed to bear a distinguishing rank. If then all natural evil be either a consequence or an effect of that which is moral ; death itself must

depend for its continuance upon the continuance of moral evil. Consequently, when moral evil shall be done away, death itself must cease to have a being; because natural evil is dependant upon that which is moral. As therefore the destruction of moral evil, must issue in the destruction of death; so the destruction of death must issue in the destruction of those subordinate effects which result from it. And as the dissolution of the body is one of these effects which result from death, dissolution must be done away; when therefore dissolution shall be destroyed, the human body must rise into newness of life, and partake of immortality.

Thus then, since the annihilation of moral evil must involve the destruction of death, and the destruction of those modes which the *natural effects* of death assume; we have an assurance of a future resurrection, established upon the most unquestionable evidence that moral certainty can afford. For, as death is a natural evil, and depends upon moral evil for its existence; so those natural effects which result from death, must depend upon death for their existence; in the same manner as death itself depends upon moral evil for all that being which it possesses. And as all those natural effects which result from death, must, together with death, be included in the general term *natural evil*, it follows, that when natural evil shall be destroyed, these natural effects and consequences must expire; and the human body, escaping the embrace of death, which shall be no more, must quit the confines of the tomb.

Admitting then that natural evil is the effect of that which is moral, of which the dissolution of our bodies must be no inconsiderable part ; to evade the force of the preceding argument, it must be asserted, that “ *natural evil can survive the cause which first called it into being.*” To this objection I have already replied. And I have only again to repeat, that if the objection be admitted, we must suppose an effect to continue in existence without a cause ; which involves this contradiction, that it is an effect, and not an effect, at the same time. As, therefore, natural evil cannot survive its cause ; it follows, that whenever moral evil shall be extracted from human nature, then, dissolution as well as death, both of which are branches, must expire.

As, therefore, the immortality of the human soul, and the certainty of those rewards which await the souls of the righteous, must be admitted, from evidences of the most indubitable nature ; that moral evil must be extracted from them is a truth capable of the most decisive proof ; since such souls must be incapable of felicity, whilst tainted with moral evil, even if they should be admitted to a region of unsullied glory. As, therefore, moral evil must be separated from human nature, in order that it may be rendered capable of entering into a state of consummate joy ; and as natural evil cannot continue to exist, when moral evil is destroyed, because it involves a contradiction ; considerable weight is hereby added to this branch of moral evidence. For, since it cannot be denied that the

separation of the soul and body by death, and the subsequent dissolution of the component parts of the body are branches of natural evil, which must perish when moral evil is done away; we are furnished with all the evidence which the subject itself seems capable of admitting, that the bodies of all the righteous shall come forth in a glorious resurrection.

That the arguments adduced in this section, are partial in their application, I am well aware. They have been advanced in favour of the resurrection of the righteous only; and if their validity in this partial application be admitted, I ask for nothing more. The righteous and the wicked comprehend the whole of the human race. In proof that the bodies of the unrighteous shall rise again, some arguments will be adduced hereafter, from that immutable justice which is inseparable from God. It is of no inconsiderable importance in the present stage of my discussion, for us to know, that moral evil and natural evil, are so intimately connected together, that when the former is done away, the latter must expire; and that from hence the reverse may with justice be inferred. Natural evil may, in the progress of its continuance, be changed in the modes of its application, and existence; but, as it is naturally dependent upon moral evil for its being, we may rest assured, that while moral evil continues in existence, natural evil, in some or other of its modes, must continue undestroyed.

But, in the righteous, all natural evil must be overcome, before they can inherit the kingdom pre-

pared for them before the foundation of the world. Nevertheless, for the accomplishment of these vast and all-important realities, we must direct our views to that eventful æra, when death shall be for ever slain, or swallowed up in eternal victory. Then, when natural evil shall be removed, when dissolution shall be destroyed, and the will of man shall be lost in the will of God ; the bodies of all his saints shall come forth in glory and immortality, and every vestige of human degradation shall be for ever done away.

SECTION II.

Arguments tending to prove, that the Annihilation of moral Evil, can only be effected by a Vicarious Sacrifice.

IT has been observed in the preceding section, that no effect can either commence existence, or continue it when begun, without a cause. And that this cause, to which any effect is justly ascribed, must be adequate to the production of it, may be reasonably esteemed as first principles of philosophy, I presume no one will dispute. To deny either of these points, will involve us in absurdities and contradictions, which it is useless to name.

The arguments which have hitherto been advanced in favour of the resurrection, have been chiefly founded upon the annihilation of death ; and the annihilation of death has been inferred from the presumed annihilation of moral evil. But, as the

cause through which moral evil can alone be destroyed, has been hitherto unexplored ; even the conclusions which we have drawn will be found inconclusive and abortive, and all our former reasonings must fall to the ground, unless we can be satisfied of this primary foundation, namely, that moral evil shall be actually done away.

The various branches of evidence which conspire to establish the resurrection of the human body, have a mutual dependence upon one another ; and such is the nature of this dependence, that if only one link be broken, the whole chain must be destroyed. But, how closely soever the various parts, which constitute the general chain of argumentation, may adhere together ; there must be some permanent rock to which the first link must be united. It is on the stability of this rock that the permanency of the connective links must depend, to reach those remote conclusions which result from this harmony of parts ; and which, I have presumed in the case before us, to issue in the final resurrection of the human body from the dead.

That moral evil does exist, is a fact too obvious to require any proof ; and that it could not have existed in the primeval state of things, is a necessary consequence which results from the nature and attributes of God. And certain it is, in order to the attainment of true felicity, that moral evil must be done away from man.

The destruction of moral evil, is however, a point which has rather been assumed than proved ; and it has been assumed, from the state of heaven,

and the nature of those rewards which await the righteous in a future state of being. But, how the destruction of moral evil is to be effected, remains yet to be considered ; and the great question now before us is, To what cause can we attribute an effect so important? On this cause must depend the happiness which awaits mankind beyond the grave ; and upon this cause must ultimately depend many of the principal proofs which we can adduce in favour of the resurrection of the body from the grave. It is a question, in which the Christian and the unbeliever are alike interested ; and which involves difficulties which Christianity alone can solve, and solve only by admitting the *vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ*.

That man in a state of innocency must have been entitled to the protection of God, cannot with any pretence of justice be denied : because the reverse will involve the conduct of God in absurdities and contradictions. And it is equally certain, that when moral evil entered into the world and took possession of the human heart ; the relative situation of man to God, must have been considerably changed. The justice which was before engaged in this protection and preservation, now enforced a claim of an opposite nature and demanded that satisfaction which culprits are obliged to make to a violated law.

Under these circumstances, all hopes of future felicity must have abandoned the human bosom ; and man must have been placed at an infinite distance from its possession, unless his hopes had been founded upon some principle distinct from that in-

exorable justice, to which he had forfeited both his freedom and his life. For, since the utmost of his exertions could only have been available for the present moment, in his primeval state; it is absurd to suppose, that in his lapsed condition, he could have acquired any additional qualifications; or new powers to exert in the cause of virtue. Were we to admit this, we should be driven to this strange conclusion, that man, immediately after the introduction of moral evil, was a lapsed being and not a lapsed being at the same time. But, as such contradiction never can be admitted, it plainly follows that all human claims to protection were forfeited to divine justice; the relative situation of man as to his maker must therefore have undergone a considerable change.

If, however, on the contrary, while we admit the existence of moral evil, we suppose that the relative situation of man was not changed by its introduction; we reduce moral evil to a nonentity. And, from admitting its existence, while we exclude that change in man, which is essential to its being, and by which its existence can be known; we are forced to suppose that moral evil exists and does not exist at the same time. And, as all those principles which involve contradictions must necessarily be false; it plainly follows that the relative situation of man must have been considerably changed by the introduction of moral evil into the world, since the reverse includes a contradiction. And, as his lapsed state could not possibly have conferred upon him any new powers of exertion in the

cause of holiness and virtue ; he could neither accomplish his own restoration, nor claim it from that justice, to which he durst not make any appeal. It therefore follows, that the restoration of man from holiness and happiness, must have arisen from a cause distinct from that of justice, which was bound to protect him while he continued in a state of innocence ; a cause, which, under no circumstances whatever, could possibly reside in man.

We can, perhaps, have no conception how any thing can be capable of softening the rigours of justice, except that principle of divine mercy, which we are assured must reside in God.

But here a new difficulty occurs. For, although both justice and mercy be admitted to reside in God ; yet, how the interference of mercy could supplant the demands of justice or abrogate its claims, are points of difficulty, which, abstractedly from the atonement, we could never comprehend.

If justice would voluntarily relinquish its claims, without an equivalent, to make room for the operations of mercy ; it must follow that God could not be necessarily, but only arbitrarily just. And the moment that we admit that God is not necessarily just, that very moment we annihilate one of his essential attributes, and undeify his nature. For, if God in any given period of duration ; either of time or eternity, can relinquish his justice, in that very period we must behold him without it. If therefore, omnipotence can exist through one hour, without justice, it can exist through two, for the same reason ; and that which can exist thus through

two hours can consequently exist thus for ever ; and in this case we must admit, that justice is not an essential attribute of God. But, as those principles which lead to undeify his nature, or to annihilate his attributes, must certainly be false ; it follows, that justice must be an essential attribute of the divine nature, and therefore God must necessarily be just. And, as God is and must be necessarily just ; it follows with the most unquestionable certainty, that the claims of justice cannot be relinquished without an equivalent, either in time or in eternity. And, if justice, without an equivalent, cannot relinquish its claims ; no room can be found for the operations of mercy, though it be admitted that it did exist and reside in God.

Neither can it be supposed, that the claims of justice can be supplanted by the designs of mercy. For could we suppose the case before us possible, without a vicarious sacrifice ; the attributes of God must be presumed to act in hostility to one another. If the mercy of God should attempt to supplant his justice ; the attempt must be successful or it must not. If it be successful, the success of mercy will prove the imbecility of justice ; and if unsuccessful, that want of success will fully demonstrate the futility of the attempt ; and in either case, it will be demonstrated that God is not possessed of all possible perfections. Thus then, while we, from his nature and attributes, admit the existence of the divine perfections, even while we presume that his mercy can supplant justice ; we must suppose that God is possessed of all possible

perfection, and yet not possessed of it at the same time.

If the mercy of God can overcome his justice in one instance, nothing can hinder it from overcoming the divine justice in all. And, if the divine justice may be totally overcome, while the essence of God remains entire; it follows from this supposition also, that justice is not essential to the divine nature.

If mercy can counteract the claims of justice, I would ask, does the essence of God remain entire, or is it destroyed? If the essence of God remain, while the claims of justice are counteracted by mercy, it is evident that justice is not an essential attribute of his nature; because the essence is presumed to remain, when this attribute is done away. But if, on the contrary, his essence be destroyed by the removal of his justice, we must, by allowing the operation of his mercy, suppose the existence of God to continue after we have supposed his essence to be destroyed. Hence then this conclusion follows, from each supposition which we have made; namely, whether we presume the divine essence to remain or to be destroyed, that the mind is conducted in either case to a palpable contradiction. Thus if the essence of God remain, it must be an essence without justice; but certain it is, that an essence which is devoid of justice cannot be the essence of God: here then we have the divine essence and not the divine essence at the same time. But if, on the contrary, the essence of God be destroyed by the removal of his justice, through his mercy; we admit the divine

existence without the divine essence. As therefore these contradictions are equal on each side, it must finally follow, that justice cannot be supplanted by mercy, without a vicarious sacrifice, any more than justice can relinquish its claims, without a forfeiture of its name and nature.

As therefore, justice cannot relinquish its claims, nor mercy snatch the culprit from its hands ; because in the former case, God must cease to be necessarily just, and in the latter, that power which is presumed to be infinite must be overcome ; since God can neither act contrarily to himself, nor suffer his attributes to move in hostility towards one another ; it follows with the most decisive certainty, that justice and mercy can never meet together in the same subject, without that medium which the gospel holds forth, in the vicarious sacrifice of the Saviour of the world. But, through the mediation of the atonement, the whole face of things assumes a different aspect. We there plainly discover how God can at once *be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*. Through this sacrifice, the order of heaven and earth appears again to revive ; and we behold in contemplation, another Eden descending from the skies, to bless mankind and renovate the world.

Whatever may be said in favour of the human powers, or of the dignity of human nature ; we never can suppose, without admitting an absurdity, that any being which is wholly polluted can renovate itself. Such a notion carries with it its own refutation, and includes within it, irreconcilable sup-

positions which we cannot possibly admit. For if any given being that is wholly polluted, can be presumed to renovate itself, renovation must begin in some polluted part; because that which is either wholly corrupted in a natural sense, or polluted in one that is moral, can include nothing but corruption and pollution in its nature. And, to suppose that which is wholly corrupted or polluted can produce a renovation in itself, is to suppose that corruption can beget incorruption, and that pollution can beget purity. We must suppose it to act in opposition to itself, and to produce an effect which cannot be included within its nature, which is a palpable contradiction. For, as no cause can produce an effect, which is the reverse of itself, and which it has not the power of producing; so, nothing can result from any given principle, which is not virtually included in its nature. And, as a power to renovate, cannot be included in any nature that is wholly destitute of purity, and therefore destitute of this power; it must follow, that the renovation of human nature, as well as its reconciliation to God must arise from some extrinsic cause. And certain it is, that that cause which influences nature, without being included within it, and influences it so as to produce its renovation, must be supernatural, and must therefore come from God.

Whatever the nature of this influence or the mode of its operation may be, we are satisfactorily assured that it must communicate itself to man, in order to produce those effects, which a renovation implies, and which we ascribe to its sacred energy,

Without this, it is no longer influence ; and indeed an uncommunicated or uninfluencing influence, is a contradiction in terms. But, since influence and not the absence of it, is the point under present consideration, its existence must necessarily be admitted ; and therefore it follows, with unquestionable certainty, that some mode of communication must also exist, through which it imparts its renovating energies to the internal and perceptive powers of the human soul. And, whether we attribute this influence to *divine mercy, to love, to the grace of God, or, to the operation of his Holy Spirit*, the final result will be the same ; and the regeneration of the human race must be attributed to an agency as well as energy which resides not in man.*

* It has been hinted by some of my respectable friends, to whom the subject of this Essay was but imperfectly known, " That all arguments which may be drawn from human reason, in favour of the resurrection of the body, will have a tendency to set aside the efficacy of the atonement, and those consequent blessings which are ascribed by all true Christians to the grace of God, manifested through Jesus Christ." To this objection I beg leave to offer a few thoughts.

From what has been written in this Section, I flatter myself that every intelligent reader, will not only be satisfied that I have no design to set aside the atonement, but that I make it the ground-work of the whole fabric which I am attempting to raise. Strike off the atonement, and you deprive me of my only assurance that moral evil shall ever be destroyed. Now, if moral evil be not destroyed, then natural evil, which results from it, cannot be discontinued ; and, in this case, I can have no proof that death, which as a considerable branch of natural evil, shall be annihilated ; and if death be not annihilated, I can have no reason whatever to hope, either that dissolution shall

As therefore those arguments which have been advanced in favour of the resurrection, have been founded upon the destruction of death, while the de-

be done away, or that a resurrection of the body shall take place.

Thus are the different parts of the chain of evidence linked together. Instead, therefore, of undermining the truth and efficacy of the atonement, or attempting to set it aside, it must be for the interest of my present work, to see it established upon the most immovable basis; for, to the atonement all my arguments, from whatever sources they may be drawn, either directly or indirectly must ultimately appeal.

In addition to the above objection, it has been furthermore observed by some, "That if the doctrine of a Resurrection be revealed in Scripture, all attempts to support the fact by abstract reasoning, must indirectly call in question the veracity of revelation; and, that all such arguments must be both unnecessary and injurious." To this objection also I must beg leave to offer a few words, because I have no conception how, either the authority or authenticity of the Bible can be weakened by being supported by those collateral evidences, which the book of nature yields.

With some, it has been thought to be a thing incredible that God should raise the dead; and with others, the thing itself has been deemed to be impossible. And we are well assured, that where any given fact is proposed to our belief, which appears either incredible or impossible, no genuine assent can be yielded to it by a rational and well-informed mind. Because, according to the incredibility or impossibility of the fact proposed, our assent must be proportionably weakened, till, perhaps, the evidence in its favour will become insufficient to produce conviction.

An attempt, therefore, to clear the important fact before us, from the incredibility or impossibility which is supposed to be included in its nature, can neither be unnecessary nor injurious to the cause of truth, but must serve to elucidate and confirm it, since we are thereby presented with a train of collateral evi-

struction of death has been inferred from the annihilation of moral evil, so the annihilation of moral evil must be founded upon the redemption wrought

dence, which is designed to act in concert with the authority of Revelation. On this ground, the conviction which the mind receives arises from two distinct sources, and is at once rational and divine. It is rational, because it is extricated from those embarrassments which occasionally lay an embargo on belief; and it is divine, because revealed by the unerring Spirit of Truth. † The advantages, therefore, which we derive from rational argument, when it can be adduced in favour of facts which appear incomprehensible to some, and impossible to others, must be of considerable weight. † On this ground, that incredibility which owes its origin to incomprehensibility loses all its force; and the fact, by such elucidation, is brought down to a level with those, with which incredibility never could associate. Rational argument must, therefore, be of considerable use to the sceptical part of mankind; and cannot be wholly lost with those who admit the authenticity of revelation, since it tends to elucidate those facts which the word of God reveals, without unfolding their integral parts.

But when, from this incredibility which some attach to fact and incident, we turn our thoughts to those who imagine the fact to be impossible; the utility of rational argument assumes a more imperious tone; and the fact itself, thus rescued from apparent contradictions and impossibilities, and thus supported, demands our assent on grounds of the most unquestionable nature. For, while we either perceive, or fancy that we perceive, any thing contradictory in the fact which is proposed to us for our belief; it is impossible that the mind of man can make that fact an object of faith, be it either rational or divine. No man can believe that to be true, which he perceives to be false and contradictory; even though he could not disprove that the revelation which asserted it were divine.

Hence then this general conclusion is obvious, that those arguments and reasonings which are calculated to remove those apparent contradictions which the mind perceives, instead of

out for man by Jesus Christ. † And to this also we are indebted for those sacred influences which must of necessity be supernatural: through which the renovation of our souls can alone be effected, and through which we hope for felicity beyond the grave. And after all our acute investigations and philosophical researches, it is to this redemption that we must ultimately look, for the stability of those arguments, which, though drawn from other sources, tend to prove the resurrection of the dead. †

SECTION III.

On the Effects which may be expected to result from the Destruction of Death, when considered under the Idea of a Person.

WHEN, in conformity to general usage, we consider death to have a real and personal existence, we can have no conception how he can be partially de-

being injurious and unnecessary, are of incalculable service to the cause of Christianity. And, instead of deserving to be rejected by us, they are entitled to our warmest approbation; since by these means we furnish ourselves with weapons against those, who call in question the authority of that Revelation to which we appeal. By thus taking our stand in one common ground with the adversaries of Christianity, the doctrine of the Resurrection can be defended upon principles, from which they dare not dissent; while the additional advantages which we derive from the written word, mark the cause which we have espoused with the most decided superiority.

stroyed. That death must be destroyed, when moral evil shall be done away, is a point which we have already attempted to prove; and if destroyed by the removal of moral evil from the righteous, the effects which result from that destruction must extend to the utmost bounds of human nature; and consequently, all those captive millions that have been held in his cold embrace, must be liberated from the house appointed for all living, through a general emancipation which the destruction of death must impart.

In this view, however, a mere restoration to life and consciousness, has but little or no connection with a future state of happiness or woe. ✕ Rewards and punishments beyond the grave, depend not upon *physical but moral causes*; ✕ and therefore must be considered in a distinct light from a simple restoration to life. The morality and immorality of human actions, must relate to the moral and retributive Justice of God; and the good and evil which are included in them, are points with which these natural causes have only a remote affinity. So that, although we admit that a resurrection of the bodies of the wicked shall take place; yet in this view it appears rather as a consequence of the resurrection of those of the righteous, who must be restored to life in the resurrection of the just; than as an act which is primary and independent.

Under these views, the life to which all human nature shall be restored, can be considered as nothing more than a restoration to a state of animation, which is equally removed from an alliance

with punishment and reward. The only point, therefore, under present consideration is, whether or not any thing shall awaken the mouldering atoms from the torpid mass of matter, and call them again into a state of animation which shall never end. Rewards and punishments will, without all doubt, be administered individually, and every man must be accountable for himself; but physical causes act upon a wider principle, and are of universal application.

That death shall be destroyed by the annihilation of moral evil, in all the righteous, has been already proved; and as under this consideration, we have attributed to death a real and personal existence, our inquiry is almost reducible to this point, can death continue to exist, after he has been destroyed.

In this view, which now lies before us, we must consider death in the character of an universal tyrant, extending his gloomy empire over the captive millions of the human race. Now, under this consideration, should any cause arise, through which the tyrant should be dethroned, it will certainly follow that all his captains must be released from his dark dominions. And, if this cause, which dissolved the empire, should both dethrone and destroy the tyrant; it must also follow, that all his active energy as well as dominions must forthwith be at an end. And, where the dominion and existence of a captor shall entirely cease, there all influence must necessarily discontinue; and nothing further can be supposed in being to perpetuate the dominion of a tyrant, whose empire and person are both de-

stroyed. For, were we to admit that the influence of death could survive the existence of death, we must suppose it to be an effect without a cause ; and we must be obliged to conclude, that in point of duration, he survived his own existence, and put forth an energy after his being was destroyed.

If the bodies of all the dead, rise not from the grave, when death is destroyed ; they must be detained by some power or they must not. If by some power, it is evident that this power must partake of death ; because that which has no connection with death, can never detain the fragments of the human-body, in a state of dissolution, which is an effect of death. But to suppose, that the power of death can be inherited, when both his person and empire are presumed to be destroyed ; and that the power of death can be inherited by that which does not partake of death, will involve us in a complication of contradictions. It therefore follows, that the instant we suppose the body to be detained in the grave, which is a state of death, by any active power, we at once attribute the detaining power to death ; while we detach it from him, through that destruction which we had previously admitted ; and suppose a connexion to subsist between that which is, and that which we admit to have been destroyed. In short, it is to attribute the detaining power to death, and not to attribute it to him, at the same time ; which is a palpable contradiction.

But if, on the contray, the bodies of the dead are detained in the grave by *no power* ; the argu-

ment defeats the purpose for which it was brought, and operates in favour of a resurrection from the dead. For, since that which is divested of power can produce no effects ; to suppose that the resurrection of the body can be prevented through a mere *negation*, is to suppose it to be detained in the grave by a nonentity. Since, therefore, those bodies which are detained by nothing must certainly be free ; all external causes of their confinement must be done away ; and they must finally come forth to partake of that general discharge from the grave, which shall follow the destruction of death, and the annihilation of moral evil in all the saints of God.

If death, who is still considered in a personal view, shall be destroyed by some cause ; both the benefits and evils which result from that destruction, must be of general application, and must extend to those individuals who had no share whatever in his destruction.

To illustrate this, let us suppose a given case. Let us suppose that *A* extends an influence over *C* and *D*, by which both *C* and *D* are held in captivity to *A*. In this case, if *A* be destroyed by *B*, it must follow, even with demonstrative certainty, that *A* can never extend its influence over either *C* or *D*, after it has been destroyed by *B*, even though *C* and *D* did not concur in the destruction of *A*. And to suppose *C* and *D* to remain in captivity to *A*, after *A* had been destroyed by *B*, is to suppose that *C* and *D* remain in captivity to a nonentity ; and that they are now detained by a power which is

admitted to be destroyed. But since that which is detained by nothing must be freed from all captivity; neither *C* nor *D*, can any longer be detained in their stations, or prevented from starting up into immortal life.

It will in this place probably be said: "That though the influence of death should be withdrawn; yet it will not follow that the body must rise again. For, being in itself destitute of all active energy, the mere removal of the influence of death will still leave it in a torpid state." This objection is of some weight, and requires much attention.

We have already presumed, that death has extended an influence over the human race, and we are now supposing this influence to be withdrawn; therefore unless some considerable changes follow the removal of this influence, influence and no influence must be the same. But, to make influence and no influence to be the same, is even to reduce the influence of death to a nonentity. And, in addition to this, it will follow, that if the influence of death be a mere nonentity, no necessity can appear either for its application or removal; because neither the application nor the removal of any nonentity can possibly affect that subject to which it is applied, or produce those effects which we attribute to death. In short, an influence which may be either applied, or withdrawn, without producing any change, must be one that is uninfluencing; and an uninfluencing influence is a contradiction in terms.

That death, or something which we call death,

in what light soever we may view it, forms either the termination, or an important epoch in human existence, is a truth which it is equally useless to prove or to deny. We behold it in those awful hours of human desolation, which daily take place ; and we discover as its invariable result, some of the most astonishing changes which the human body, according to our present organs of perception, can undergo. The depositaries of the dead, present us with a view of our departed ancestors ; and every charnel-house furnishes us with more than demonstrative evidence, that those changes are certain which we must shortly experience.

In a preceding chapter and section, it has been contended that both death, and that dissolution of the body which succeeds to death, are the necessary and natural effects of moral evil ; and that they result as natural consequences from the removal of the tree of life. The progressive movements of these natural effects, we perceive through every stage of human being, from the cradle to the grave ; while, in that subsequent dissolution of our bodies which succeeds to death, we trace the ultimate separation of all their visible parts.

✧ But, how regular and progressive soever these effects may be produced, through the operation of moral evil, the primary cause of all ; we behold, in that awful moment, which lies on the verge of time, and divides it from the ocean of eternity, in which the soul and body are separated from each other. An important crisis, which suddenly pro-

duces an important change ! In this awful moment, life retires, and death usurps its place ; animation ceases in an instant ; vitality disappears, and the immaterial spirit, dislodged from its habitation, repairs immediately to a state of certainty, to anticipate the destiny that awaits it in another world. X By what peculiar application of power this change is wrought, is a question that forms no part of our present inquiry ; it is sufficient for us to know that this actually takes place, and that it cannot be accomplished by a *mere nonentity*.

If then those changes to which we refer are in actual existence, and these changes cannot be produced by a nonentity, because a nonentity can produce no effects ; it follows that some *active influence* must be admitted to exist, to produce those changes which we discover taking place in death. In what light soever death may appear unto us, whether with an existence that is positive, or only relative ; we have demonstrative evidence that the influence exercised on the occasion, is not uninfluencing ; and consequently, we are satisfactorily assured that it cannot be a nonentity,

Can, then that influence, which produces such important changes, and which since it separates soul and body, cannot be a nonentity, be finally removed by a nonentity ? Or, can we possibly suppose that the mere removal of an entity is a nonentity in itself ? If so, action, and the reverse of action must be the same ; and entity and nonentity can have nothing to distinguish them from each

other ; in this case the removal of a positive influence, and the removal of nothing must be alike, since the term nonentity will equally apply to both. And hence, since the conclusion undeniably follows, we may be assured that the principle itself must necessarily be false, which breaks down all distinctions between entity and nonentity, and blends together without any discrimination, that which is, and that which is not.

If then the *removal* of an entity, cannot be in itself a nonentity, nor effected by one ; some considerable change must be produced by the application of that energy, through which the influence of death will be removed. And certain it is that the change will be considerable, in proportion to the magnitude of that influence which is removed by this adequate cause, whatever may be its nature. As therefore, the influence which death extended, produced those effects which we discover, in the separation of soul and body, and in the final dissolution of the bodily parts, so this counteracting energy (which cannot be a nonentity) must produce effects congenial to its own nature. And, as the destruction of death, is one of those effects which must result from the removal of moral evil, the intrinsic nature of this counteracting energy must manifest itself in reuniting the soul and body, when death shall be no more. Therefore, as the influence of death produced, by its operations, the dissolution of the human body ; this adequate cause through which the influence of death is removed, must coun-

teract the effects of that influence which it destroys, and finally result in the resurrection of the body from the grave, as an inevitable consequence.

From these reasonings, which have been advanced in the preceding paragraphs, it will follow by a natural inference, that when the influence is totally removed, the body cannot remain in a state of torpor. For, as that influence, through which the body had been reduced to a state of dissolution, could not be a nonentity ; so the cause through which this influence is counteracted, must be admitted to have a similar state of existence ; because those effects, which we behold on death and dissolution, can only be counteracted by an active energy. Now, as all influence, in the nature of things, must produce some effect to be entitled to that appellation ; so this counteracting energy produces its effects also, in the removal of the influence of death. And, as the effects, produced by the influence of death, were torpor and inactivity ; so the effects produced by this energy, through which the influence of death shall be removed, must be the reverse, which is a destruction of torpor and inactivity. They must therefore finally issue in a restoration of the body to animation and vigour ; and consequently, in a resurrection of the body from the sleep of death. For, as a separation of soul and body is the immediate effect of death (or probably is death itself) so, the removal of it must be a reunion of both, since nothing less can be the reverse. And as, by its disunion from the soul, the body had been reduced

to a state of corruption, and its component parts had been dissolved and separated from one another ; so, in order to effect the reunion of soul and body, the body must be restored to life and activity ; and, since death is presumed to be no more, life and activity must necessarily put on immortal vigour.

The primary source of all our calamities, in what form soever they assail us, must be moral evil ; and the fatal succession which appears to take place in those changes which we undergo, seems to proceed in the following order. † Moral evil produces death, death, which either produces, or consists in a separation of soul and body, produces torpor, and this finally issues in the separation of the component bodily parts. And, whether we begin at the primary cause, which is moral evil, and trace onward to its remotest consequences, or begin at the remotest consequence, and trace upward to its primary cause, all our inquiries must centre in moral evil ; and we must view it as the real parent and legitimate source of all those *natural evils** and calamities which afflict the human race.‡

* On the *moral consequences* of moral evil, much may be said to distinguish them from those natural evils, of which I have spoken. But, these consequences can have little or no connection with those physical causes, which I have been attempting to investigate. They will undoubtedly remain as punishments to the individuals, to whom they apply ; but we can have no conception of any punishment which includes eternal inertness and unconscious inactivity. A resurrection therefore to immortal vigour, and perpetual life, seems to follow from the above principle ; and all individuals both good and bad, must rise from their graves to receive their respective rewards.

SECTION IV.

On the Effects which may be expected to result from the Annihilation of Death, when considered as having only a relative Existence. Probation confined to the present State.

THAT the human body in the moment of its separation from its immortal partner, and also in all the subsequent stages of its dissolution, must undergo

We are told expressly in the book of God, that *all that are in the graves shall come forth ; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation*

The degrees of punishment due to lapsed intelligences, seem, however, to arise not from physical, but *moral causes* ; and they must perpetually remain in close connection with the moral justice of God. In what manner the morality and immorality of human actions are to be precisely estimated, is hardly a branch of the human province ; it rather appears to be a question, which in all probability is too vast for the mind of man to grasp. It is sufficient, that God has pointed out both our privileges and our duties ; and we rest ourselves assured that the Judge of the whole earth, unable to act inconsistently with his nature, must dispense justice with an impartial hand, and therefore must do right ; so that individuals as well as nations must ultimately acknowledge that rectitude, which regulates his ways, both in time and in eternity. And, though difficulties, which seem inexplicable, involve the moral economy of God, in his government of the universe ; yet he has in the midst of our blindness, communicated to us a sufficiency of information, through which we see that these difficulties which encircle us, arise not from the imperfection of his ways, but from the limited state of the human intellect, which must necessarily be unable to comprehend, or even to penetrate the complicated parts of the amazing whole. ✕

considerable changes, it is needless in this place either to repeat or prove. The certainty of those facts, to which I allude, even more than demonstrate that death, or something to which we annex that desolating appellation, must have some kind of existence ; because that which is a mere nonentity can never act ; and consequently, can never produce those effects, which we behold in the dissolution of the human frame. The existence of death must therefore be either *real* and *personal*, or *relative* and *dependent*, or a *mere privation* ; these being the only modes of possible existence which we can conceive.

In the preceding section, we have supposed, in conformity to the general usage, and poetical description, that death, in a personal capacity, extended his destructive dominion over the human race ; and that his personal destruction, together with the ruin of his empire, must issue in the emancipation of those, on whom he had laid his iron hand.

But, whether death have a *real*, or only a *relative existence*, or whether we consider it in no other light than that of a *mere privation* ; the reasonings which have been brought to prove that it must be destroyed, when moral evil shall be done away, I flatter myself will equally apply ; and clearly prove in either case, that as moral evil must be its primary and its only source, the bounds of its duration must be fixed ; and that its total destruction is necessarily connected with a state of future rewards. A difference may indeed be produced in our abstract

notion of death, by the additional idea of personification, which we have already introduced ; but, when we divest our minds of those extraneous ideas, and consider death, abstractedly from all foreign circumstances, as *a separation of soul and body*, and as *the period of our existence here below* ; the final result of our reasonings will be the same. And though the additional idea of person, should be omitted, all I have attributed to death will be applicable to the thing itself ; and with the variation of a few circumstances, will be the same under every consideration in point of fact.

That death is but *relative*, and therefore destitute of all *positive existence*, is with me a matter of full conviction ; and therefore personality is but a superfluous idea, purely imaginary, and totally inapplicable in point of fact. The changes which human nature, in the hour of departure, undergoes, are self-evident, and will therefore admit of no dispute ; it is the personification of death only which is not admitted, and which in reality can have no existence. And therefore, whether the idea of personification be retained or dismissed from our notion of death, as it has no necessary connection with those changes which death produces ; the influence which we have supposed, and which we constantly perceive, must remain precisely the same. And from hence it is evident, that whether the idea of person be real or only imaginary, the reasonings which I have advanced in favour of its being dependent upon moral evil for its existence, retain all their force. Since

therefore, all that influence which death possesses, and which it extends over the human body, is derived from moral evil ; death, *whether real or relative*, whether personal or only a *mere privation*, can have no further existence after moral evil is done away.

If the existence of death be only relative, and therefore one with which the idea of person can have no connection, which must be admitted ; it will involve a contradiction to suppose that it can survive the cause which gave it birth, and on which it must be dependent for its mode of existence. For, if we were to presume that it could survive the cause which gave it birth, and upon which it must continually depend ; it will no longer be a *relation*, but a positive being. And, to suppose that any thing can have a *positive existence*, which is admitted to be but a *mere relation*, is to suppose that it is a relation and not a relation at the same time. As therefore, the cause of death is moral evil, and moral evil must be destroyed to qualify the righteous for future rewards, as has been already proved ; the inevitable consequence must be the destruction of death ; and, as death has only a relative existence, its destruction must finally issue in future life.

Whatever exists relatively must, from the circumstances of its being, necessarily be in a dependent state ; and we can no more conceive that a mere relation can exist abstractedly from that subject from which it derives its being ; than we can conceive a shadow to exist when its only occasion is totally de-

stroyed. When therefore, the parent of all natural evil shall be removed, returning life must fill up the dreary blank, and human nature must again revive from the grave.

Nor will the case appear less favourable to the general resurrection of the human race, if we consider death, in *the third place*, in the light of a *mere privation*. In short, a mere privation in this view, is but a branch of relative existence, and is therefore connected with it. The same observations will apply in both cases, and the destruction of death, whether considered either as a *mere relation* or as a *privation* of any particular mode of life, must be the destruction of this relation, or that of the privation; and consequently that which destroys my privation of life restores me again to animated existence, and banishes for ever that privation in which my death consisted.

If a privation of life date its origin from any given cause; it is certain, whatever the nature of that cause may be, that it can only have a dependant kind of existence; and, that it can continue no longer in existence, than it is supported by that cause, on which it depends. And, as the removal of that cause must destroy all dependencies, even the *privation of life* must perish, and consequently, where the absence or privation of life is not to be found, life itself must be in a state of actual existence. It therefore follows, that the destruction of death must be a restoration unto life, and a restoration of human nature from the grave.

Nor will it be of any avail to say that death itself

is but a *mere negation*." The destruction of a negation must be the production of positive being ; and it is only by the introduction of the latter, that the former can be effected. The removal of darkness is the introduction of light ; and we can no more conceive that a medium state can exist between them, in which neither light nor darkness makes its appearance, and actually exists ; than we can conceive how any given portion of space can be deprived of being, or that matter can exist without figure or extension. As therefore, there can be no medium, between the *absence* and *presence* of any given subject or idea ; it follows, that the removal of the one must be the introduction of the other, just as the removal of light must be the introduction of darkness, as an inevitable consequence. If then the privation of life is the identical act which introduces death, so the removal of this privation of life must be the removal of death ; and the removal of death must be that very identical act which restores to life.

The removal of a negation must be the introduction of the reverse ; without this no removal of a negation can be supposed. If then, death be a negation of life, and this negation be removed ; if the removal of this negation be the identical act which introduces the reverse ; it follows, that the removal of death is the removal of the absence of life, and is, consequently, the very act through which life must be restored.

Now, since this *privation* of life, which has in

numerous instances already taken place, and must ultimately take place upon all the descendants of Adam, must be occasioned by some cause ; it must necessarily be dependant ; because it will involve us in a contradiction, to suppose that a mere negation can exist in any other mode. If therefore, the *privation of life* be dependant, and dependant upon that cause which first called it into being ; the destruction of this cause must necessarily occasion the destruction of this privation of life ; and the instant in which it perishes, it must give place to that life which is the reverse. For, since in the consideration now before us, the reverse of life must be *no life*, or the *privation of life*, so, the annihilation of this *no life*, or *privation of life*, must be the identical act which restores life ; it therefore follows that the bodies of the dead must be set at liberty, and, freed from all captivity, must start forth into immortal life.

But, how forcible soever these arguments and modes of reasoning may appear, like the subject to which they are applied ; they are purely of a dependant nature. The destruction of death has been presumed from first to last to depend upon the annihilation of moral evil ; and this has been uniformly inferred from the certainty of future rewards, the redemption of Jesus Christ, and the nature of that moral justice, which is at once immutable and inseparable from God. There is, however, another source of argument, to which we have hitherto made no application :

namely, the nature of *probationary existence*, which may probably afford us some additional assurances that moral evil must be done away. To this point we therefore beg leave to call the attention of the reader ; and with the remarks which may be made upon it we shall close the present section.

That moral evil does exist, is a fact which, I flatter myself, few will have the hardihood to deny. And it is almost equally certain, from the analogy of the divine conduct, and from the nature of moral justice, that moral evil must be confined to the present probationary state of existence, for beyond this we can have no conception that it can retain its *present relation to man*.

Between a state of probation and a state of retribution I know of no medium, that can be supposed to exist to a conscious and reflecting being ; though it must be admitted, that these two states are as remote from each other as the mind of man can reasonably conceive.† A state of retribution must be subsequent to a state of probation : because it is founded upon a cognizance of those actions, which are presumed to have taken place in that previous probationary state of being.× And hence arises the impossibility of our conceiving that these two distinct states can exist together in regard to *the same person*, in *the same place*, and at *the same time*. And, as a state of probation looks forward immediately to a state of retribution, and a state of retribution looks backward to that which was probationary ; a medium condition, which partakes not

either of the former or of the latter becomes impossible, and therefore can have no existence.

If no state of retribution shall succeed to a state of probation : that being who is presumed to be a probationer must be a probationer for nothing, which involves a contradiction, by making that being a probationer and not a probationer at the same time. And if, on the contrary, we invert the order of our thoughts, and suppose that no probationary state preceded a state of retribution ; our idea of retribution is either destroyed or involved in a contradiction. For, to suppose a state of retribution which had not been preceded by a state of trial, is to suppose that it is a state of retribution, and not a state of retribution at the same time. Since, therefore, both of these cases will conduct us to a contradiction ; it follows, that these states must be respectively admitted in their own order, that the one cannot exist without the other, but that in the same subject they cannot possibly meet together.

If man, while in a future state of retribution, be still in a state of probation ; it follows with the most unquestionable certainty, that he must either be a probationer for nothing, or that his present state of retribution cannot be eternal ; because if we admit that state of retribution to be eternal, there can be nothing future to which probation can possibly refer. To suppose that a future state of retribution will not be eternal, is to suppose that the moral justice of God can visit abstractedly from its own consequences ; and that an attribute, which is essential to an infinite being, can be finite in its operations ;

that successive duration can exist in eternity, and apply to God when time shall be destroyed;— and that there can be a period in this successive duration, beyond which the moral and retributive justice of God shall cease to operate. But, since these suppositions will, beyond that period in successive duration, leave moral and retributive justice, existing in theory, totally without the practical consequences which are inseparable from its nature; which is supposing retributive justice to exist without retribution, which is justice and no justice at the same time; it follows, that a state of retribution must necessarily be eternal. As therefore, a state of retribution must be eternal; and since no man can be a probationer while he is a probationer for nothing, because it involves a contradiction which has been already noticed; it follows also, that a state of retribution and a state of probation cannot exist together in relation to the same person. And, from hence we must infer, that, in relation to man, where retribution begins probation ends; and therefore death must necessarily be that point, which changes our mode of existence, and conducts us from a state of probation to that state of retribution which must be eternal. X

If the spirits of just men made perfect, enjoying the felicities of heaven, either before or after that a resurrection shall have taken place, be in a state of probation, a fall from the regions of glory must be possible; because the idea for which the term probation stands, implies a condition which leaves us

free to depart from what is right. For, where there is no possibility to depart from good to evil in a probationary state, there no distinction between vice and virtue can practically be known ; and consequently a moral agent, thus placed, can neither be subjected to any future punishment, nor undergo any preparation for any future reward.

On the contrary, if we turn our thoughts from a state of happiness to a state of woe, while we retain the idea that a state of probation may exist to man beyond the grave ; it must then follow, that lapsed intelligences cannot be placed in the extreme of misery, nor lodged beyond the reach of possible restoration. Their state, however dreadful, must be exempted from despair, that last and greatest of human ills ; nay, the supposition goes much further, and makes it possible that virtue may grow in the regions of eternal woe. For, certain it is, that as a state of probation implies the possibility of a departure from bliss, so the same state implies a possibility, on the contrary, of a deliverance from woe. A state of probation looks forward to some retribution, and if those who inherit future misery are probationers, that state which they inherit cannot be eternal. But, since this conclusion is contrary to what has been already proved ; since it involves the moral and retributive justice of God, and leads immediately to those contradictions which have been already noted, we are compelled finally to conclude, that no probationary state can survive the

grave, or exist in respect to man in a state of future retribution. X

That the present is a state of probation, is perhaps a truth so clear, that all attempts to support it by argument must be deemed superfluous ; I shall therefore assume it as an admitted point. And, as probation looks into futurity for some retribution, we must be probationers for that life which lies beyond the grave. In that state we must be accountable for the actions of the present life ; and receive that retribution which flows from the moral justice of God. ✕ As, therefore, retribution and probation are incompatible with each other in the same state ; and, as in a future state retribution must exist ; it follows, that the present state of probation shall be done away, to make room for those rewards and punishments, which are the *moral consequences* of our actions in the present life. ✕

That a state of probation is necessary to the existence of moral evil, is so obvious, that the instant we suppose the contrary, we impute its origin to God. Between *choice* and *necessity* there can be no medium to man, in all those actions which are of a moral nature. Those which originate in the former, demonstrate a probationary state ; and those which originate in the latter, can entitle the creature to neither praise nor blame. As, then, a probationary state must be done away, and must cease with our present state of being, we can have no conception that moral evil can continue to exist,

when that state which was absolutely necessary to its existence, shall be no more.

If moral evil can exist in a state which is not probationary, which must be admitted if it exist beyond the grave, it must exist without any discriminating criterion, by which the morality and immorality of actions can be distinguished from each other ; or we must presume, that the moral law must be transplanted into a future state. In the former case, we must suppose transgression to exist where there is no law, which is unjust ; and in the latter, we must suppose, that even a state of retribution is probationary, which has been already proved to be absurd. If then, the latter of these cases involve a contradiction, and the former be unjust ; if no transgression can exist where there is no law ; and if a probationary state cannot be a state of retribution ; it follows, that moral evil must be confined to a probationary state. For, could we only imagine that moral evil could be determined to exist, without the violation of those laws which are peculiarly appropriate to our present condition ; we must admit the existence of moral evil, while we admit ourselves to be totally destitute of those rules of discrimination, by which alone good and evil can be distinguished from each other.

Existing in this state and manner, moral evil can produce no consciousness of innocence or guilt ; the rules of eternal right must be unknown, and consequently it can excite no solicitude, and awaken neither our hopes nor fears. The rewards and punish-

ments, to which it may expose its possessors, cannot be founded upon those principles of justice which are comprehensible to man ; because the individuals, unable to act, except under the direction of chance or the impulse of necessity, cannot be the subjects either of censure or applause.

To suppose that the same laws, which now distinguish vice from virtue in the view of man, shall continue to operate beyond the grave, is to suppose the moral condition of man to be precisely the same both in time and in eternity. We must therefore admit, that those laws which were given to man in this life, must continue to operate when our confines shall be enlarged, and when the present condition shall be done away. These suppositions must break down the principal distinctions between time and eternity, and make those distinct abodes to differ chiefly in the locality and enlargement of our scenes of action. In fine, it will make a state of retribution to be a state of probation ; they will become terms synonymous with each other to which we may even annex the same idea ; in short, it will be a state of retribution, and not a state of retribution, at the same time.

But, since a state of retribution necessarily implies a state of previous probation, while a state of probation as necessarily looks forward to a state of retribution ; the terms and ideas must be so distinct from each other, that all attempts to blend them together will involve contradictions of the most palpable nature ; probation in such a case can be no probation, and retribution can be no retribution.

We, therefore, come to the same conclusion which we have already seen, namely, that moral evil must be confined within the boundaries of the moral law ; that this law must be confined to a state of probation, that probation is confined to the present life, and that retribution lies beyond the grave. x

What the physical nature of moral evil is, when abstracted from man, I take not upon me to say ; neither do I presume to determine in what manner it applies to other lapsed intelligences. Man is the subject of our inquiries, and “ the proper study of mankind is man.” Of this truth, however, we may be assured, that moral evil, as it applies to man, must apply to him *as such* ; and therefore must exclusively apply to him in his compounded condition. It was to man, in his compounded state, that the laws of God, both natural and revealed, were exclusively given ; and to him in this state those laws, which distinguish vice from virtue, must exclusively apply. But when this compounded mode of man’s being shall be dissolved, and we shall enter into another condition of existence, I can have no conception how those laws, which were given to man, in his probationary state and compounded condition, can be applicable to him in another, where probation, and (if the body rise not) compound must be alike unknown.

From these sources of argument, in conjunction with others, we cannot avoid inferring, that moral evil must be confined to a probationary state. And therefore, when this probationary state shall cease, even moral evil shall be no more.

That death shall terminate our probationary condition of being, is too obvious to require further proof. The separation of soul and body, together with the changes which present themselves to our senses, plainly mark the awful moment as an important epoch in existence; an epoch which launches the disembodied spirit into a future state, and commences that retribution which shall never end. And, since death must be considered as a natural effect of moral evil, which must be confined to our probationary state; when the cause expires, the effect must necessarily discontinue. For, as the existence of death is not real and personal, but rather *negative, relative, and dependent*; it can no longer continue in being than while that cause on which it is dependent is preserved. And, since moral evil is the primary cause from which it sprang, and is exclusively confined to a probationary state which death must terminate, the consequence is evident, that death, and moral evil, and a probationary state, must expire together.

As death has passed upon all men, because all have sinned, these arguments will apply individually to every victim of its gloomy power. The natural effects which finally terminate in the dissolution of the component parts of our bodies, may appear indeed to continue for a season; but when that cause which produced these effects shall be totally subdued, these effects must for ever cease. Then that principle, which we shall soon consider, which constitutes the identity of the body, under all its changes, both in life and death, removed from those oppres-

sions which retarded the energies of its active nature, shall begin to put forth its infant powers. And, sufficiently ripened, through the recess which the grave affords, for a future state, this principle, when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed, shall put on immortal life.

With the natural effects of moral evil, the moral consequences of human actions can, however, have but little or no connection. These moral consequences depend upon distinct causes, and must stand or fall with the moral attributes of God. His justice must proportion rewards and punishments in the great day of retribution, with impartial equity, and give to every man according to his works. But, when death shall be destroyed, the natural effects of death must perish ; and the human body, liberated from its cold repository, must come forth into newness of life, and begin a state of existence which shall never end.

SECT. V.

On the Difference between the natural Effects and moral Consequences of moral Evil; with Arguments tending to prove that the former must cease, while the latter will continue for ever.

IN the preceding Section I have contended, that our present state of existence is a state of probation; but, ~~that~~ beyond the grave a continuance of this probationary state must be *inapplicable*, and therefore will be unknown. ~~And~~, from hence I have concluded, that those laws which were applicable to a probationary state, cannot be presumed to retain their present operative power, in that state where probation must be swallowed up in retribution, and can have no existence.

From common observation, we cannot avoid learning, that, whatever modes of existence moral evil may assume, its principal branches must consist in those actions to which the existence of the body, as well as that of the soul, is absolutely necessary. ~~And~~ certain it is, that these branches of moral evil can no longer be repeated, than while the body remains in union with the soul, and retains the power of muscular action. ~~Now~~, we well know that in the hour of death, these powers of bodily action are quite suspended, and consequently, the body can be no longer subjected to those laws,

which are of a moral nature, and which distinguish vice from virtue. And hence it is we learn, that through the important change which death occasions, the body, while in a state of torpor, can be subject to no more law, because its alliance with the conscious spirit is now dissolved. And, since the body when united to the soul was the subject of a moral law, and is now, through the disunion which has taken place, a subject no longer, this law must discontinue its operations, through a kind of necessity which is implanted in the natural constitution of things. As, therefore, the present constitution of man must be dissolved in the hour of death, we cannot, beyond the boundaries of the present life, be capable of those actions which constitute moral evil in our present state; consequently, retribution must succeed to the present life, and we must hereafter, either enjoy those rewards or suffer those punishments, which justice shall annex to our moral actions here below.

But, though moral evil, confined to the violation of those laws which are only appropriate to the present probationary state, must cease, together with its *natural effects*, when this life shall be no more, it will not follow that the *moral consequences* of our present actions must therefore expire. All effects have a necessary dependance upon their causes; and the same modes of reasoning, which will convince us that death must cease when moral evil shall be done away, will assure us that *the moral consequences of moral evil must continue in existence*,

because they are the natural effects of the moral justice of God.

If the moral consequences of moral evil depend upon any cause which we denominate natural in the present life, they must necessarily perish, when that cause either ceases to exist, or ceases to operate. In this light I have considered the dissolution of the human body as the natural effect of death, and death as the natural effect of moral evil; and hence I have inferred the resurrection of the body from the certain destruction of moral evil, and the utter impossibility that any natural effect should survive its cause.

But, as on the contrary, the *moral consequences* of human actions must depend upon *moral causes* with which they are connected; they cannot be presumed to cease until these moral causes cease to operate, or shall be totally done away. As, therefore, that cause upon which the future consequences of our actions depend is the moral justice of God, these moral consequences being dependent upon that immutable attribute, must run parallel with it, and be perpetuated through all duration.

Were it possible for us to suppose that justice had no existence, then no moral consequences could possibly have had a being, either in this life or in another. Moral evil must, therefore, consist in a deviation from the principles of justice, and those moral consequences which consist in future punishments must be considered as the natural effects which are produced by it, in all those who are guilty of immoral actions. While, therefore, moral justice continues in existence, its effects must follow; and

as the principle is at once immutable and inseparable from the nature of God, its nature must be eternal, and its effects must continue for ever. And, hence also it is evident, that as those actions, to the consequences of which it applies, were performed by the body and the soul in conjunction with each other, a resurrection becomes necessary, to prevent the effects of justice from being defeated in their application.

Death, on the contrary, as has been already proved, is rather a *natural effect* than a *moral consequence* of moral evil ; and therefore must stand in immediate contact with its natural cause. When therefore moral evil shall cease, its natural effects must discontinue, though the moral consequences remain ; and the result of that discontinuance will be a resurrection from the grave, which is a restoration to perpetual life. While on the contrary, the moral consequences of moral evil, taking a deeper root in the immutable justice of God, who can punish the guilty for ever, must remain when all natural effects shall be entirely done away.

That the *moral consequences* of moral evil are distinct from its *natural effects*, and may exist where death and dissolution can have no place ; is evident from the condition of *fallen angels*. They, though deathless, because they kept not their first estate, are doomed to welter in worlds of fire for ever, and to feel the moral consequences of their transgression ; while the natural effects of moral evil are inapplicable to their natures. For, being in all probability uncompounded essences, we can

have no conception that any natural effect could take place upon them, either in those changes, which man from his mixed nature undergoes in the hour of death, or in that dissolution which is its subsequent result. Here then are evidently moral consequences detached from those natural effects which we behold taking place in man.

But, if we change the scene, and turn our thoughts from these lapsed intelligences to the brute creation, the prospect will be entirely inverted. The brute creation incapable of moral action, can have no connection with the *moral consequences* of moral evil. They are only capable of feeling those *natural effects*, and that subsequent dissolution which they undergo ; leaving all moral consequences to apply to those rational intelligences, who, from their superior powers, are capable of distinguishing good from evil, and of wilfully choosing that evil which leads them to future woe. These natural effects, which brutes are doomed to suffer, seemed to arise from their intimate connection with man ; their bodies are compounded of different elements, and they are exposed to that dissolution, to which, in the present state of things, all compounded bodies are invariably liable. Here then are evidently *natural effects*, totally detached from all *moral consequences*, applied to beings incapable of moral actions ; and consequently incapable of moral obedience or transgression.

But, when in the third place, we turn our views from angels and from brutes to man, we are

presented with a different scene. The essence of angels being purely spiritual, exposed in their fall their rational nature to the moral consequences of sin ; while they were exempted through that uncompounded essence, from feeling those natural effects to which otherwise they would have been exposed.
 × While, on the opposite side, the essence of brutes, being purely material, exposed them to feel the natural effects, and exempted them from the moral consequences of moral evil ; because they were destitute of a moral nature. × But, as on the contrary, the essence of a man consists in the union of two distinct natures, as he is compounded both of matter and spirit, and apparently includes the essence of an angel and that of a brute ; so, must he be exposed to *the natural effects of moral evil* while here, and to its *moral consequences* hereafter.

If then, those beings that are *purely spiritual* are, when fallen, exposed to the *moral consequences* of sin, while those creatures which are *purely material*, are exempted from these consequences, and exposed to its *natural effects* ; the conclusion is both obvious and striking, that a being whose essence consists in the union of both these natures, must necessarily be exposed to the natural effects and moral consequences together. Such then is precisely the case with man. And, as both of these natures, which constitute his essence, concurred in the performance of actions which neither could have separately committed ; actions, which became amenable to justice, from the direction which they derived from the spiritual powers of the soul ; a resur-

rection of the body must be demanded by the moral and retributive justice of God.

On these, and facts like these it is, that we behold the distinction which subsists between the *natural effects* and the *moral consequences* of sin, as they apply to man. We behold the *former* depending upon moral evil as its *natural cause*: and we perceive the *latter* in close connection with the *moral justice of God*. The former must expire when its natural cause shall perish; while the latter must continue until moral justice can be no more. In death I have supposed that moral evil shall expire; and consequently that death must then give place to life. \times But, as the moral consequences of sin are founded upon an immutable cause; these consequences must survive time and continue through eternity. \times

If, therefore, we conclude that rewards and punishments will continue as the moral consequences of guilt and virtue, and continue for ever; while death, the natural effect of sin, shall be done away; we shall behold all the parts of the economy of heaven harmonizing together, and even the *natural effects* of moral evil making way for the great displays of infinite justice and mercy. And, by being rendered subservient to the wise designs of God, they shall tend to the developement of those attributes, through which all finite lapsed intelligences will be held forth, either as monuments of justice or of mercy through all duration, even for ever and ever.

CHAP. IV.

ON IDENTITY IN GENERAL.

SECT. I.

On the Evidences of Identity.

IN what personal identity consists, is an important question, which has been frequently agitated and variously discussed ; and on this account it may appear presumptuous rather than prudent in me, to attempt an investigation of a subject on which the learned world has been so much and so long divided. But, since it is a point which is inseparably connected with the resurrection of the body from the grave ; I am under a necessity of examining briefly its evidences and nature, in order to fix some criterion that may serve to solve some of those difficulties with which the subject of the resurrection appears to be perplexed.

It is an opinion which has obtained the sanction of general suffrage that “ *personal identity consists in consciousness.*” Whether this opinion be true or false I take not upon me presumptuously to determine ; but certain I am, that my habits of reflection have produced in my mind a different conviction, and led me to conclude that this consciousness, which with many, has been thought to constitute identity, is no more than an evidence which we have

of it. For, as consciousness implies a substance in which it inheres ; so, this consciousness rather *presupposes* than *constitutes* that identity which is attributed to it.

It is certain, I think beyond all doubt, that our consciousness of any given fact can never constitute that fact ; nay, the fact itself must stand or fall independently of our consciousness of it ; and must in the order of nature, have had an existence previously to any consciousness which we could possibly possess of it. Existence, therefore, and our consciousness of it are two distinct ideas.

In addition to the above observation, I think it will appear equally evident, that, though some particular action might have been performed by me, of which at present I have no recollection, while I am destitute of all consciousness, I am at the same time totally deprived of all evidence of the fact itself ; and consequently, my consciousness which in this case must be absent, can never constitute the identity either of the action, or of any person or thinking substance, by which that action was performed. If, therefore, personal identity consists in consciousness, it will be extremely difficult for us to ascertain, as in the case before us, whether identity can remain after all consciousness of it is totally done away.

There can, I think, be no doubt, that our consciousness of any given fact will be admitted by ourselves as decisive evidence of that fact ; while this consciousness remains ; and this evidence will sufficiently prove to us the existence of the fact itself.

But then, this consciousness of the fact being only a simple action of the mind, must be brought into contact with the fact, to the certainty of which it becomes evidence. And as this consciousness is founded upon the fact which it necessarily presupposes, and to which it owes its existence; it can never constitute either the fact which it proves, or the identity of that being by whom the fact was performed. Nay, this particular act of consciousness, instead of constituting personal identity, will not immediately prove its existence. It will indeed sufficiently prove the fact in question; and hence we may rest assured, that if there be an *action* there must be an *actor*; but the personal identity of the actor can neither consist in the action, nor be constituted by that consciousness which assures us of both, nor by any subsequent consciousness which we may hereafter possess.

Our present consciousness of any given action, which we have performed, is to us an invincible evidence of the existence of that action; and the subsequent consciousness which we may have hereafter, of our present consciousness, will be to us a sufficient evidence of our consciousness of the given action. Our present consciousness of any given action is a simple act of the mind, operating upon the past connection which subsisted between the action itself and our former consciousness of it; as well as between the former consciousness and action, and our present consciousness of both. In the former case, our consciousness became an evidence

of the action itself, while in the latter our consciousness becomes evidence of the former, and is an act of the mind operating upon its past operations.

But, although our former consciousness of any given fact or action, and our present perception of that past consciousness must be admitted as indisputable evidence on the points in question; yet personal identity cannot possibly consist in either. And therefore it will follow that personal identity may remain uninjured and entire, though all evidence of its existence were done away. And, since our consciousness of our own identity depends upon identity itself for its existence; we cannot avoid obtaining an assurance, that where identity is not, there a consciousness of it cannot possibly be.

But, though there can be no consciousness of our own identity where identity is not; it will not follow, that where our own identity is, there must be an invariable consciousness of it. And the reason is evident: The identity of our persons being independent, can have no necessary reliance upon our consciousness of it; whereas our consciousness of our own identity, being in itself necessarily dependent must expire, the instant we conceive that identity, on which it is founded, to be done away. Hence then it is evident, that our own personal identity may remain, though our consciousness of it should even be lost; while on the contrary our consciousness of it will infallibly prove its existence; and, from its dependent nature, demonstrate that our identity never can be lost while our consciousness of it remains in existence. And hence also it follows,

that our own personal identity, and our own consciousness of it, are two distinct ideas ; and that the former never can be constituted by the latter. Consciousness therefore never can constitute identity, though it is the only infallible evidence which we seem to have of it.

Whether consciousness be any thing more than an action of the mind, is not for me at present to inquire ; but of this we are certain, that identity must, in its own nature, be immutable, intransferable, and exempted from all changes ; and consequently our consciousness of it must, by being founded upon it, be equally permanent, (if its report be true) however fluctuating and unstable it may be in its own nature. In fact we can have no conception of consciousness, when detached from an object ; and therefore we can have no decisive mark, by which to determine upon its nature. But, admitting it to be in itself nothing more than an action of the mind ; nothing perhaps can be a greater mark of folly, than to conceive that our personal identity can consist in that which is fleeting, transitory, and unstable.

As consciousness must either be an action, which results from some substance, or the peculiar modification of some substance itself ; it must in the order of nature presuppose the existence of that substance from which it results, or of which it is a modification ; because no peculiar modification can be coeval with the thing modified. And if, in the order of nature, the substance must have existed previously to those actions which result from it, and to those modifications which it may afterwards assume ; it follows with all the evidence of demonstration, that

the identity of the substance, whether material or immaterial, can neither consist in, nor depend upon those actions or modifications of being, which depend entirely upon the substance itself for their own existence. I therefore think it to be unquestionable and decisive, that consciousness can never constitute the identity of any substance, whether material or immaterial : though it must be the most unquestionable, and perhaps the only evidence which we have of its existence.

If consciousness constitute personal identity, it will follow, that where there is no consciousness there can be no identity. And, admitting the sentiments of those to be true, who discard all spiritual substances from the world, and admitting also that all matter is inert ; there can be no such thing as identity in existence. And, to avoid these contradictions and absurdities, we must conclude that whether the substance in question, (if purely material) be animate or inanimate, its identity can neither be constituted nor destroyed by any mode of consciousness, which may either reside within or result from it.

Every distinct individual must have a distinct principle of identity, which cannot possibly lose itself in the identity of another ; we now satisfactorily know that *Peter* is not *Thomas*, that *Thomas* is not *Richard*, and that *Richard* is not *John*. But all this might have been, if personal identity had no existence. It is only from the existence of identity, that it can be distinguished from that diversity, or that one individual can be distinguished from another ; and the instant we suppose personal identity to be

destroyed, from that very instant the distinction between identity and diversity must be done away. But, if identity in the abstract be admitted to exist, and to exist as universally as substance, which cannot be denied, and yet to be constituted by a consciousness which is less universal; it will follow that identity is universal and not universal at the same time, which is a plain contradiction. Consciousness therefore can never constitute that identity, of which, to ourselves, it is an unquestionable evidence. As, therefore, some fixed principle of personal identity must be admitted, to render our consciousness of ourselves permanent and decisive; the question seems to be placed beyond all doubt, that neither our consciousness of an action, nor our consciousness of our own performance of it, can any longer retain either its name or nature, than while this fixed principle, upon which it is dependent, remains in a permanent state of being.

Were it possible that this principle of identity could be changed, while our consciousness of its sameness remained entire; the evidence of our consciousness would be falsified by fact. And in this case, as we could have no assurance whatever, that our consciousness of our own personal identity was founded upon that identity; we must instantly banish all our notions of assurance from the world, and place ourselves in a condition which would oblige us to doubt even of our own existence; and finally to doubt the existence even of those doubts which we professed to entertain. In short, it would introduce universal scepticism, which would reduce the

mind to a chaos of contradictions. For, should my consciousness presume to assure me, that I am now in point of personal identity the same person that I was ten or fifteen years ago, when in reality I am so far changed, that what then performed an action to which my consciousness bear witness, is now no longer in existence; the internal report of my consciousness must be falsified by the removal of that identity to which it bears witness. And, if the only evidence which I can possibly have of my own personal identity, deceive me, I am at once deprived of the only proof which can ascertain its existence, and by which I can distinguish the same from another. But, since these conclusions are contradictory and so big with absurdity, that they cannot be admitted, it appears infallibly certain, that while our consciousness of our own identity remains, the identity of our being must remain also; and that it is demonstrated to be the same, by that consciousness which we have of it. Without this, our consciousness of identity must be a consciousness of it, and no consciousness of it at the same time; and the consciousness of *our own identity* and *not of our own identity* in the same instant. And, as this act of consciousness which demonstrates the sameness of my person, must look backward through reiterated acts, to form a contact with that distant action which I am conscious that I performed in an early period of my life; so, as it will infallibly prove the certainty of that action, as that I am the same person that then and there performed it. And to deny the truth of these sentiments, we must suppose

that my consciousness of that early action is no consciousness of it ; so that it will be consciousness and no consciousness at the same time.

The certainty of an *action* will infallibly prove the certainty of an *actor* ; and my consciousness that I am the person, and that that action was performed by me, will be indubitable evidence of both. And the future consciousness, which at any given period I may have of these facts, will prove with equal certainty (because consciousness of personal identity never can be transferred) that the substance in which that consciousness may inhere continues the same, whatever may be its abstract nature. Hence then we obtain, through the evidence of consciousness, a satisfactory assurance that it remains the same, notwithstanding all the mutations and modes and accidents to which we may have been exposed, during the intermediate spaces of duration, which have elapsed between the time of the action, and that time, when in future I may be conscious of it.

But, while I thus assert that our reiterated acts of consciousness, following in regular succession, will form an unbroken chain of evidence, of the most decisive nature, through which the sameness of that principle in which this consciousness inheres, and the certainty of the action may be to myself demonstrated ; I would by no means insinuate that this chain of evidence will inform me what this principle of identity is, or how it is constituted. To know with precision in what it consists, must be a subject of distinct inquiry, with which this species of evi-

dence has little or no connection. Repeated acts of consciousness, resting upon the same action, will prove that some substance in which it inheres is in existence, and that this substance is the same ; but they will not prove to any one what it is. Consciousness will prove that it is unchangeable in its nature ; but it will neither identify any one of its properties, nor tell us what those properties are which constitute it.

I am well assured, that without consciousness we can know nothing. But, though the modes of our consciousness are multiform and various, perhaps the distinct species of identity, which are in existence, are more multiform and various than the modes of consciousness which we possess. In order therefore to prosecute our inquiry with some degree of accuracy, we must simplify our question, and disencumber ourselves of all extraneous matter. Hence then, to inquire into the distinct nature of identity, and our distinct perceptions of it, must be the subject of another section.

SECT. II.

On our distinct Ideas of Identity, founded upon the diversity of its Nature.

WHEN we turn our thoughts to the term Identity, and attempt to make inquiries into its nature, it is indispensably necessary that we should define with accuracy, not only the sense in which we use it, but

the subject itself to which it may be applied. The necessity of doing this, in the case before us, will appear still more evident, when we reflect, that there are many views in which the human body may be considered, which form no part of our present investigation. There is *an identity of the component parts* of which the body is formed, and there is *an identity of the modification of them*. There is also *an identity of man, considered as a compound of matter and spirit* ; and there is *an identity*, which, detached from these, *is only applicable to the body itself*. These terms convey to us distinct ideas, which, though applicable to the same subject, are only connected by a remote affinity.

The *identity of modification* must consist in the same position of every particle which is included in any given substance ; so that neither any particle, nor the position of it, can possibly be removed, while this identity of modification is presumed to continue. And should any particle be removed from its primitive station, and lodged in some other part of the same portion of matter, the identity of modification must be thereby so effectually destroyed, as though it had been totally removed from the corporeal mass.

But, although the identity of modification should be thus destroyed, it will not follow that the *identity of the component parts* must perish. For, while the particles of which any given portion had been composed, remain unmixed with foreign particles in the same mass, the identity of the component parts must remain, in what form soever the

particles themselves may be combined and connected together. But, if any given particle should be removed from the given mass, or any new acquisitions should be made, in either, or in both of these cases, the *identity of the component parts* of this given body must be entirely lost. It therefore follows, that the removal of one particle from its primitive position will destroy the identity of modification, while the total removal of another from the mass will as totally destroy the identity of the component parts themselves. It is indeed true, that after these changes, the identity of the particles themselves will remain; but this will be the identity of distinct particles taken separately, and not the identity of the component parts considered as one collective whole.

The *identity of man*, considered as a compound, must consist in the union of two distinct substances, vitally united together. To constitute this identity of man, neither the identity of the modification of the parts, nor the identity of all the parts themselves can be absolutely necessary. The man may continue, though the parts of which his body is composed may be considerably changed. And while the union continues between the matter and spirit of which he is composed, our complex idea of man remains uninjured and entire. Such are the ideas which I have of *modification*, of *compound parts*, and of *man*.

But, when we turn our thoughts to the *identity of the human body*, our idea becomes distinct from those which have been considered, and involves

several questions of considerable difficulty and of considerable importance. It is an identity which must continue permanent amidst those perpetual changes which the body undergoes.

But, since the particles which, from time to time, adhere to the corporeal mass, are in perpetual fluctuation ; and, since almost every moment impresses upon our bodies some considerable change, it will be impossible to fix the identity of them in the whole of the numerical particles which have occasionally adhered to that vitality which animates the human frame. A variety of arguments would operate to refute so absurd a supposition, as that which would make the identity of the body to consist in the same numerical particles ;—particles, which have perhaps occasionally adhered to different bodies, which bodies on this account may with justice present to them an equal claim. And, though the apparent modification of the body may seem to continue amidst these vicissitudes ; yet, whatever resemblance it may bear, it cannot be the real modification of the same particles ; because they are supposed to have given place to others, which are now removed, and will perhaps adhere to it no more.

To know with certainty in what the identity of the body consists, is perhaps a point of considerable difficulty. It is a question, which is more easily proposed than answered ; and we seem to know with more certainty in what it does not consist, than in what it does. This, however, will admit of little doubt, that the thing itself, and the evidences of it,

are distinct ideas. We may be totally ignorant of the nature of the former, while the latter may be attended with all the assurance necessary to produce conviction ; just as we may be assured of our own existence, though we may never be able to know with certainty what it is that constitutes it. The evidences of a fact always presuppose the existence of that fact ; and for that reason can never constitute that fact which they presuppose. In like manner, the consciousness which I now have that a certain action was performed by me, (the self same person who now writes) is to me a sufficient evidence that sameness remains to the present moment ; and will be so, as long as my consciousness of that action continues, notwithstanding all the changes which my body has undergone ; even though I should never be able to comprehend in what it is that this sameness consists. For, if consciousness cannot be transferred from one system of matter, or from one substance to another, without losing its own identity, which I think no one can either affirm, or successfully controvert ; it will follow that my reflex act of consciousness will, at any given period of my existence, afford me the most unquestionable evidence that I am the same person and not another. For, if I am now conscious that I was once conscious of a fact, which is past and gone, my present consciousness will be a sufficient evidence of my past consciousness, and place that former consciousness beyond the reach of uncertainty and doubt. And, as that former consciousness must be on the

same ground a proper evidence of the fact which it ascertains ; I arrive by these means at the most decisive evidence, that the fact of which I was once conscious, and of which consciousness I am now conscious, was done by this self same identical person, who now possesses the present consciousness. The first act of consciousness was in contact with the fact itself, the next act in contact with the foregoing ; and my present act being in contact with that act which next preceded it, preserves the chain of evidence unbroken and entire to the present moment. Nothing, therefore, can either affect or injure the chain of evidence, which thus reaches back through preceding links to the facts in question at any given period, within the reach of recollective duration. And as a transfer of consciousness cannot possibly take place, from one substance to another, without destroying the identity of that consciousness ; the identity of that consciousness will prove the identity of the substance in which it inheres, without the possibility of deception ; though it can never constitute that identity which it thus unquestionably proves.

That the identity of our bodies does exist, we cannot for a moment doubt. Our own existence will upbraid our incredulity, and force the belief of the fact upon us, in spite of our most obstinate resistance. That personal identity and the evidences of it are two distinct ideas, I have already proved in this and the preceding sections, in which I have considered consciousness as the only medium through which past and future can be brought into contact

with one another ; and through which present perceptions can be brought into contact with actions that are past and gone. But, though this consciousness of what is past is an unquestionable evidence of the *certainty* of identity ; yet identity itself must be a something totally distinct ; and can never be constituted by that consciousness, which is only an evidence of it, which necessarily presupposes it, and which, on that account, must derive its origin and constitution from another source.

When we turn our thoughts to the term identity, and view it in its most enlarged and extensive signification ; we shall find but few things to which the term will not apply, even though they present us with ideas, which have little or no connection with one another.

When we speak of the *identity of substance*, we mean every thing which is included within its essence, abstracted from all its appendages, its configuration, and modes. When we speak of the *identity of parts*, we mean every identical atom, included in that union, which at any given period is presumed to engross our thoughts. When we speak of the *identity of any particular modification*, the same identical arrangement is necessary, in all the modes and situations of the particles which suggested to us the first idea. But, when we speak of the *identity of man* we not only take into our idea the corporeal parts of his body, but include in that complex term, the union of two distinct substances, and consider them in mysterious contact with one ano-

ther : and by the removal of either, our complex idea is so far mutilated, that the identity of man is totally destroyed. All therefore that afterwards remains in the mind, is an idea of two distinct substances, now no longer in contact with one another.

In the midst of these distinct applications of the term identity, it is however necessary to distinguish and select, that we may know with precision what that identity is, after which we inquire ; where it is to be found, —in what it consists ;—and what are its most distinguishing marks and properties.

The identity which constitutes the subject of our present inquiry, is neither the identity of matter nor of spirit ; it is not the identity of parts or of essences. It is not the identity of substance or of modification, nor is it the identity of man. ✕ But, the identity after which we inquire is *the identity of that particular part of man*, which subsists under all the vicissitudes and mutations of human life :—which must subsist when the spirit is removed from its confines ; it is that part which we denominate the *human body*. ✕

SECT. III.

General Observations on the Identity of the human Body.

THAT the identity of the human body must consist in something which is material, will admit of little or no doubt to a reflecting mind. It would involve a contradiction to suppose the contrary ; es-

pecially when we consider that the body itself, after the identity of which we inquire, established an idea in our minds, of which the spirit can make no part. The identity of matter must necessarily be constituted by something which is material ; and as the body is formed solely of this substance, the identity of the body must necessarily be material also. These facts arise from the nature of body, and from those ideas which we have of material substances. And, could we even suppose that the identity of the body, which is admitted to be material, could consist in something which is not material, it must be the identity of the body and not the identity of the body at the same time, which is a contradiction.

The question, however, still remains—In what does the identity of the human body consist ?

That it must be material, is a truth which I flatter myself none will presume to deny. But, in whatsoever it consists, we must involve ourselves in contradictions, were we to presume the possibility of its being transferred from one system of atoms to another. There are therefore but two points to be considered ; the first is—does the identity of the body consist in the whole of the particles which constitute the body ? or secondly, is identity peculiar to some particular part ? These two points seem to be the only ones, which can at present claim an interest in our decision.

When we take a survey of identity, in the abstract ; I am ready to allow, that we can form no conception how our idea of it can be annexed to any one part of the human body more than to another ; since

the reasonings which can be advanced in favour of the one, will apparently apply with equal force to all. But, when we view this theory in its active and practical consequences; it assumes another aspect, and places another feature on the whole face of things.

We well know, in cases of amputation, that much of the substance of the body may be taken away, without in the least affecting the identity of that body from which that substance was taken. It is true that the removal of any given particle will entirely destroy the identity of the numerical parts, as well as the identity of the modification of them. But the identity of the parts, and the identity of the body, are two distinct idéas. For, while amputation will, and inevitably must destroy the identity of the numerical parts; the identity of the body will remain uninjured and entire, as much so, as though no such amputation had taken place. And hence it will follow, that the whole of our corporeal frames,—that every part and particle of the human body, cannot be necessary to constitute its identity. For, as the identity of the body may, and actually does survive the amputation of many parts; those amputated parts can only be considered as extraneous matter, or as appendages to that principle of personality in which I shall hereafter presume to place the identity of the body of man.

But, although some parts may be thus separated from the body, without affecting its identity; yet this separation must be partial. There must be some lines and boundaries of demarkation, beyond

which amputation cannot pass, without affecting those tender and vital parts, which have a more immediate connection with the subject of our inquiry.

When we look on these remote appendages of the body, which can be separated from it without pain; the suffrages of popular opinion concur in one general sentiment, with the disquisitions of philosophy, in affirming that bodily identity resides not in these. We decide without hesitation, and that justly, that the body is the same in point of identity after the clipping of our hair or nails, as it was before; but this would be a false decision, if either our hair or nails, or those particles of which they are composed, formed any part of the identity of those bodies whence they were taken.

Those minute particles which are thrown off by perspiration, are also admitted to have no influence upon it in point of identity; neither can they occasion any change in the sameness of the body, from whence they spring. But, however the places of these evaporated particles may be supplied by new ones, the exhalations must necessarily produce a positive change in the component parts of the body, as well as in the modification of the parts themselves. Yet as the identity of the body is not changed by these real changes in its component parts; it affords another additional argument to prove, that the identity of the body, and the identity of its parts are two distinct ideas.

If then, these diminutive, yet real changes which perspiration occasions, may take place without occasioning any change in the identity of

the body, from which the particles exhale ; why may not a much greater change take place, while the identity remains entire ? When the body of a corpulent man has been reduced to a mere skeleton by a fever, we may ask—is that body the same that it was before ? In point of identity it most undoubtedly is the same, but in point of real numerical particles, it is undoubtedly much changed, and is become considerably different from what it was before. And, as the loss of particles reduced his body to that skeleton at which I have just hinted ; so, when this person shall be recovered from his reduced state, and restored to his former corpulency, it must be by the acquisition of new particles which are now incorporated in the system, in the room of those which the fever had wasted and exhaled. He must still possess the same body, in point of identity, under all the variation of health and sickness ; though perhaps not less than one third part of the particles which now compose his system is entirely new. The refined and subtle fibres, which united the identity of his body, to those portions of matter which were occasionally in the mass, were never separated from the immaterial principle within. The adhesion must have continued through all those changes which the body had undergone ; and therefore those parts, which were capable of being removed, could have formed no part of its identity.

That the identity of the man is still the same, will admit of decisive proof, from those successive acts of consciousness, which followed one another in regular order through sickness and health ; and which

being the remotest act, anterior to his disease, into immediate contact with the present moment. And, as consciousness cannot be transferred from one principle, or system of atoms to another, it never can become evidence of facts, which, to it, did not exist. But, as he is conscious of those actions which he had already performed; so his present consciousness is not only an evidence of the existence of the fact itself, but a decisive evidence also of the continuance of his identity, during all those changes through which he had previously passed.

We see then the vast alterations which sickness can produce, without affecting the identity of the body. We see also the surprising changes which an infant undergoes, from an embryo in the womb to a maturity of years, and to hoary age; through all the numberless variations to which in every stage of life the body has been exposed. And yet, through all those changes, which either sickness or health produces; which respiration, or effluvia, or perspiration can either separately or conjointly occasion, or which the embryo, from infancy to maturity can undergo; the identity is still the same.

A body, which is capable of preserving its identity under such changes as we thus constantly observe, may, without doubt undergo many more, while its identity will still remain; and undergo such changes as will baffle all calculations, on the question of abstract possibility. The changes, which it has undergone, and which it occasionally undergoes, are too evident to be denied; and from what we have seen, and what we see, we may safely pre-

sume that more considerable changes are within the reach of possibility. But, to what extent these changes may take place without affecting the identity of that body which undergoes these changes, I will not presume to say. The amputation of many parts may undoubtedly take place, while the identity of that body, (the parts of which are amputated) remains uninjured and entire. Nevertheless amputation must be confined in its application; and as I have already observed, there must be some lines and boundaries beyond which amputation cannot pass.

The hairs of our heads may without doubt be cut off; and the nails of our fingers and toes may also be taken away. And even if our fingers and toes were amputated also, I think no question could be made on the subject, that sameness in point of vital union with the immaterial spirit would still continue, though the identity of the numerical particles would certainly be destroyed; and from those partial losses we may proceed to the amputation of legs and arms. If the amputation of these were to take place, I am still inclined to think, that the man would be the same, i. e. the selfsame intelligent, animated being, compounded of an immaterial spirit and an organized body, united to this spirit by means which we cannot comprehend, would remain notwithstanding the amputation of legs and arms. And, since the vital union between these two substances must remain, notwithstanding these amputations; it plainly follows, that the identity of our bodies, and the identity of all their numerical parts, must be distinct

subjects, as well as distinct ideas, which can have no necessary connection. For, as the amputation of those parts will prove that the identity of the body still continues ; it plainly follows, that our idea of the identity or sameness of the body cannot be constituted by all those particles which had been vitally united to the corporeal mass. From the vital union still remaining, this inference is placed beyond the reach of doubt ; namely, that the principle of identity which resides within the body, under consideration, could not have been injured by the partial losses which the body had sustained ; although this principle of identity must now retire within narrower confines, than it occupied when the whole corporeal mass was perfect and entire.

It is probable, however, that amputation cannot pass much further, without approaching the secret recesses, where those attenuated fibres are, which unite the different parts of the floating mass, in close and intimate connection with those particles which constitute the identity of the body ; and which in all probability form some mysterious contact with the immortal spirit of man. The result of this reasoning will, however, I flatter myself, be sufficient to prove, that the identity of the human body cannot be constituted by that which constitutes the identity of its numerical parts. The identity of the body must be a distinct idea ; it must consist in something which remains permanent, amidst the shocks of surrounding changes, and preserves its sameness through all the vicissitudes of human life.

SECT. IV."

The Identity of the human Body more immediately considered.

HAVING, in the preceding section, considered the human body in general, as a mass of matter in a state of perpetual change; and having noticed that the amputation of many parts may actually take place, without affecting the permanent principle of its identity; it is a question which now naturally rises before us: In what does the identity of the human body more immediately consist?

That this identity cannot consist in all the numerical particles, which have occasionally been incorporated in the system, I have already hinted; and that it cannot consist either in all those which shall be attached to the body in the moment of its interment, or in the majority of them, I shall hereafter attempt to prove. And that the identity of the body should consist in any mere modification, which all the parts might at any time, either in life or death assume, it would be the height of folly to suppose.

From these circumstances, therefore, equally supported by reason and fact, as well as from the nature and constitution of the human body, we are urged to adopt this opinion, *That there must be somewhere lodged within it, some portion of immoveable matter, from which its general identity*

is denominated, in all the variations, through which the body passes, in the devious mutations of human life.

The reasons, which have led to the adoption of this opinion will be adduced in a subsequent part of this discussion ; at present we shall only urge it as an hypothetical possibility, while we trace its coincidence with the analogy of nature, and the various branches of phenomena, which are, in the different stages of human existence, presented to our observation. The insuperable difficulties, which are attendant upon every other supposition, and in many cases the evident contradictions which would be involved in it, scarcely leave the mind at liberty to adopt any other hypothesis ; while even these absurdities, co-operating with the probabilities that appear in favour of the sentiment which we have adopted, become negative arguments to prove that some portions of matter must remain immoveable in the body of man.

In these portions of immoveable matter, which must be equally removed from the influence of the atmosphere, from fluctuation, and from internal tendencies to decay, it is therefore highly probable that God has placed the identity of the human body ; and therefore to these portions we must look for that immoveable seat of bodily personality, which must necessarily continue inseparable from man. It is this principle, which must constitute the sameness of our bodies, under every change through which they may pass, and to which they may be exposed

in all the different stages of human life ; and it is to those portions of immoveable matter, in all probability, that the immaterial spirit is united in the mysterious compact which subsists between these distant natures in the present life.

Nor, perhaps, is the mysterious union the only object, which, on the present occasion, excites our notice. An indivisible spiritual substance, and a portion of corruptible matter, the parts of which have been rendered indissoluble by the power of the Almighty, may bear some resemblance to each other in the manner of their existence, how distant soever they may be in point of essence and incommunicable properties. In essence and properties they must be necessarily distinct ; while in modes of existence there may exist a greater affinity between them, than we might be induced to imagine from a popular view of such remote extremes. And, in all probability, this portion of permanent matter, which through the original constitution of its nature, is placed beyond the influence of corruption and decay ; affords us a striking emblem of that incorruption to which our bodies shall be raised, when the echo of the last trumpet shall awaken man to perpetual life.

In that peaceful region no destructive atmosphere shall assail the body, and here we behold this *portion of matter* secured from its innovations. *There* no death can approach our bodies, and *here* this *portion* is placed beyond its influence and power. There all the parts of our bodies shall adhere for ever, and here this

portion is inaccessible to dissolution and decay. There all will be *permanent*, and here this portion is *unchangeable*. In fine, beyond the grave all the parts of our future bodies shall enjoy that exemption from calamities, which seems here afforded only to a part; and be possessed for ever, in ways and modes which are at present totally unknown.

To this portion of immoveable matter, in which I have presumed the identity of the body to be placed, and which is now lodged within its confines; those accessory atoms which we acquire through the medium of nutrition, in all probability, adhere; and it is more than probable, that this present seat of personality will become a germ of future life, and be that principle which shall either unfold its latent involutions, and expand wholly into that body which shall be, or collect those wandering atoms which will be necessary to give completion to the corporeal frame, when the voice of the archangel shall awaken the dead to life.† Of the modifications, which matter is capable of undergoing, we know but a diminutive part; nor can our knowledge on this subject be complete until we are acquainted with its essence. And, from this circumstance of our comparative ignorance, resulting from the limitation of our faculties, it may not be irrational to suppose, that this indissoluble portion of matter which now constitutes the identity of the body, may even contain at present within it, the constituent parts of that body which shall put on incorruption, when mortality shall be swallowed up in life.

To know the dimensions, the texture, the configuration, and the place of residence, of this portion of immoveable matter, might perhaps be highly gratifying to the curiosity of man ; but that such knowledge would be of any real use to us, may well admit of considerable doubt. Perhaps the acuteness of those organs, which would enable us to become intimately acquainted with the internal constitution of its nature, together with those adhesive powers by which its various parts are connected, would deprive us of their utility in practical life ; our ignorance therefore of these points is probably a necessary consequence of our present mode of being.
 ✕ It is therefore wisdom and not defect in the economy of heaven, to reveal unto us such knowledge only as is necessary to our present condition, and to conceal the rest in impenetrable darkness. ✕

From our established modes of associating our ideas we have obtained a general conclusion, that in all portions of matter solidity is necessary to duration ; and hence we annex the idea of durability to all material objects, in proportion to the solidity of their contents. But, whether this established association be according to truth, may well deserve our consideration ; for, certain it is that solidity and durability are distinct ideas, which perhaps have no other real connection than that which subsists in our own minds.

If God were to create two portions of matter, of equal dimensions, but of different degrees of solidity, so different that no assignable proportion could be

found between them ; it is obvious that the real solid contents of the one, would in due proportion exceed those of the other. In this view it is evident that there must be a proportionally greater quantity of adhesion in the parts of the solid, than in those of the other portion of matter. And consequently, the more solid portion must be further removed than the other, from the primary state of those particles which compose both. ✕ That portion therefore which approached nearest to the primary state, must be less liable to dissolution than the other ; and consequently would be less exposed to its influence and power. ✕ For, if matter in its most simple state be incapable of decay, a portion which approaches near to this state, must be less exposed to the possibility of change than one which is further removed from it ; and the same reasoning will hold good in a progressive movement, until we approach the most complex forms of possible modification. And, although all matter must be alike removed from annihilation ; yet the most complex forms of substances must be capable of the greatest changes, and must undergo a greater process of dissolution than others, before they can be reduced to their pristine elements and forms.

That the air which we constantly respire is a body purely material, will admit of little doubt ; but whatever may be the internal constitution of its nature, it appears certain that the particles of which it is composed, preserve their relation to one another

with a certainty equal to that of more solid, and impenetrable substances. And, yet, notwithstanding this volatility and elasticity, which we constantly discover, no reasonable man, perhaps, ever imagined the atmosphere to be as much exposed to the power of dissolution as even a flint or a diamond. However elastic and yielding the atmosphere may appear, it is evidently as permanent and immoveable as any portion of matter with which we are acquainted ; and this circumstance plainly proves, that solidity in texture is not absolutely necessary to the durability of those material substances with which we are encircled, and which now engross our thoughts.

It is perhaps in a manner somewhat analogous to air, that those permanent principles of the human body exist, in which I have supposed its identity to consist ; but which, on that account, can be no more liable to dissolution, than the atmosphere, to which, in modes of existence, it may probably be allied. And, though to this portion of immoveable matter the different particles of flesh and blood occasionally adhere, during the various stages of our natural lives ; yet, as they are in a state of perpetual fluctuation, adhering to the system, retiring from it, and then adhering anew ; they can form no part of that immoveable portion, in which identity or sameness must consist. And since these accessory particles which are in a state of perpetual mutation, can form no part of that portion which is permanent ; it is highly probable, that, when the hour of death shall be succeeded by dissolution, these floating particles

will drop off: and resuming their primary state, leave at last this portion unclothed and totally separated from all extraneous matter.

✕ Divested of all extraneous matter, it is probably in its own nature so constituted, that it becomes incapable of incorporating with any other animal substances ; incapable of affording any nutrition, or of filling up any vacuity in the animal systems of other bodies. In this state of separation it may lie reposing in the grave in an apparently dormant condition, equally inaccessible to all violence, and removed from all decay. The accidents indeed which float on the stream of time, may tend to disturb its tranquillity, and dislodge it from its gloomy mansion ; in this case it may float in the breeze for a season, or it may be wafted into distant regions with the adverse winds of heaven ; but change of station can never affect the permanency of its nature. Removed from the influence of gravitation, through the elementary principles of its constitution, it will be able to make no resistance to external bodies ; and rendered too subtile for our organs of vision, it may elude all discernment ; becoming at once imperceptible to sight and touch. And, while in this naked state, abandoned by its immaterial partner, and separated from all those cumbrous particles of flesh and blood, which now clothe and adhere to it ; it must remain without affording any evidences of its existence, till the arrival of the great day of retribution, when resuming its medium office, or new condition, it shall be re-united to its immortal part-

ner, never to be separated from it again through eternity.

In the mean while, the particles, of which it is composed, may be so closely united in all its stages of existence, that nothing but the power of God peculiarly exerted can dissolve the compact; while nothing but a total dissolution of its internal constitution can destroy its nature. For, though a peculiar application of Almighty power, might divide these minute atoms of which it is composed: such a division will neither destroy its nature, nor reduce it to a level with other portions of animal matter. The separation indeed of these parts will totally destroy all adventitious solidity; but the reason why the permanency of its nature must still remain, is, because the perpetuity of being which is included in its nature, arises not from the peculiar adhesion of its parts, but from the indissolubleness of its nature.

Capable of yielding without receiving any violent impression, it may, from the flexibility of its nature, occasionally assume a variety of forms. To contraction and expansion it may be alike indifferent; while it may be capable of undergoing such modes as never yet attracted the notice of the human eye. But, though all matter is capable of divisibility, which through the application of infinite power, this also must be capable of undergoing; yet whether divided or entire, its nature will be still the same. It is itself, and itself alone, under every possible connection and form; though in a divided state the distances which it may occupy may be local and distinct.

Having admitted that this portion of matter may probably possess a contracting and an expansive power, it may perhaps be inquired, "To what extent is it capable of expanding? and to what minuteness is it capable of contracting itself?"

To these questions the most rational reply perhaps that can be given is, that the compages of the body form the exterior confines of its active elasticity, and beyond these boundaries it cannot possibly pass, through the limitation of its nature and its name. While, on the contrary, it may, when actually separated from its immaterial partner, and from all adhesive matter; be capable of contracting itself to such minuteness as may for ever elude our researches, and become totally invisible to all discernment, except that of God.

The capability of the expansion and compression of matter, we well know, is considerable; but we know not with certainty the full extent of either; because we are neither fully acquainted with its essence, nor with the nature of porous bodies. It is therefore not improbable to conjecture, that the specific quantity of matter which is included in that portion which constitutes the identity of the human body, may be on the one hand, when divested of pores, and reduced within the confines of the least possible space on the other, too minute for our discernment, our comprehension, or even our conception. While, on the contrary, either by these natural instinctive powers, which a portion of matter thus organized may possess; or from that direction which it may immediately receive from the immaterial spi-

rit with which it is in close alliance, it may elude through the whole progress of human life, those accidents and misfortunes to which the gross materials are exposed. And, by partially retiring into those recesses which are provided for its safety, by dilating or contracting, as circumstances shall direct the immaterial spirit, which must be its guide ; it shall remain perfect and entire through all the mutations, amputations, and changes through which the body passes, from an embryo in the womb, to full maturity and hoary age.

But, when the immaterial principle shall be separated from its union with this portion, and retire within the confines of a future world, it is not improbable that this principle of identity will retire within itself by an innate contraction, which results from the absence of its immaterial partner, which is now presumed to have taken its flight. In this case, the natural result must be, that the whole mass bereft of its spiritual inhabitant, which diffused this principle of identity through its remotest parts, which has, through the loss of its spiritual director, retired also from its diffused station, and deposited itself within some inaccessible confine ; the natural result, I say, must be, that the particles of matter which composed the whole system, now deprived by these means of their animating cement, become no longer adhesive, but drop gradually away through corruption into their primitive elements to mingle, devoid of life, and of that association which gave to us the idea of body, with the common masses of matter never dignified with life.

Nevertheless, in the midst of these probable conjectures, while this principle of identity, in union with the spirit in the present life, must be considered as different through the corporeal mass ; we cannot avoid thinking, that by some ligaments or attenuated fibres, it must be united to several, perhaps, mediately or immediately, to all the parts of the gross materials, and that through this medium it must be confined within the superficies of the adhering parts, from which it cannot be separated without occasioning immediate death. And from hence it appears probable also, that whatever the nature of those filaments may be, the violence which will separate them from the gross and fluctuating parts to which they are in some places united, must break at the same time the connection between the principle of identity itself, and the immaterial spirit, to which it is united, both by contact and manner of existence.

The continuance of this principle of bodily identity amidst the shocks of life, and the desolation of surrounding parts, is not the decision of theory but of fact ; and its preservation amidst the ravages of death may be inferred from just analogy. And though from hence it will follow, that it is capable of a separate state of existence, when perfectly disunited from all other matter and from spirit, yet it will not follow, that it will possess any active energy, or be capable of loco-motion. In this state of total separation, it can have nothing more than a kind of *vegetative existence*, totally destitute of animal powers.

Shrivelled and folded in itself, it must retire to mix with common matter, and continue in a torpid state; in which it may undergo in a way and manner which surpass our comprehensions, a passive process somewhat analogous to that of a germinating atom, which is included in grain. And in this state it may ripen towards the grand result of things, when it shall come forth in a matured state,—unfold all its latent powers,—put forth all its bloom,—and flourish throughout eternity.

Should, however, the doctrine of its separate and abstract existence be applied to the present life, while the common appendages of body are in close connection with it, we cannot but conclude, that it must on that account be erroneous. In this connection no distinct existence can be assigned to it, independently of that general state of being, which it possesses in common with nerves, and muscles, and flesh, and blood. And as no distinct mode of existence can be assigned to the component parts of the body, and to the identity of that body, the latter must be included in the former; both must be included in our general idea of body, the whole of which becomes necessary, when we consider it as applying to the material part of man.

It may perhaps be asked, “In what does the identity of that leg or arm consist, which I have supposed may be amputated, without destroying the identity of that body from whence it was taken?” To this question I would reply, that as no two parts of an individual man can survive their separa-

tion from each other, it is natural to conclude that only one identity of that body can exist; and consequently, the amputated part can have no other identity than that which consists either in the numerical parts of which it is composed, or in the modification which those parts had assumed, and from whence we had derived that complex idea.

And hence then arises the unreasonableness of supposing, that any particular idea of bodily personality can be annexed to any amputated part. For, when any part is separated from that common union in which the identity of the body resides, it is bereft of that principle, or portion of matter, from which its identity was denominated, and from which it partook of the general name. It now possesses no rallying point; its particles now join in no common union; and therefore can have no other identity than that which consists in numerical particles, or the modification of them. It now no longer enjoys an union with those parts with which it was before connected, and through which it enjoyed an interest in that common point of union of which it is now deprived, but without life, and without a natural centre of adherence, it drops into corruption, and mingles with common dust.

In this utmost division of body, which can take place, without a privation of life; that portion in which its identity is lodged, while retaining its union with the immaterial principle, must be that to which the vital atoms adhere, and which through their adherence must become the centre of resort, to all

those particles, which, from time to time incorporate in the system, and occasionally fill up those vacancies which accident, insensible perspiration, or some diminutive acts of amputation might have made. While on the contrary we cannot annex to any amputated part the idea even of animation, unless we first suppose the part in question to be united to some other portion of matter, possessed of that peculiar organization which is necessary to give us the idea of animal life. God, no doubt could give to this amputated part all the organs which are necessary to the functions of dependent beings. But then it must be remembered, that in such case it will be no longer either leg or arm, but a distinct individual of some unknown species of being, for which we, perhaps, have not a name.

CHAP. V.

ON THE ANALOGY BETWEEN VEGETATION AND
THE RESURRECTION OF THE HUMAN BODY.

SECT. I.

*That the Doctrine of the Resurrection has fewer
Difficulties than the Doctrine of Vegetation.*

W HATEVER difficulties may seem to clog the doctrine of the resurrection, they are neither greater in themselves, nor more in number, than nature exhibits in almost all her works. It is true, that the constant repetition of a wonder, invariably tends to lessen our astonishment, and we continue to gaze till we behold with the most perfect indifference the most astonishing events, as the common occurrences of our present state.

The power and process of vegetation, which are constantly exhibited before our eyes, include secrets which we cannot unravel; and when viewed with an attentive observation, discover mysteries which are by far more unaccountable than any which are contained in the belief that our bodies shall be re-animated in some future period, after the great recess of nature in the grave shall have passed and be totally done away.

If we confine our observations, on the analogy between vegetation and the resurrection, to vegetation in its most simple state ; and only presume that one grain shall, through its corruption, produce another similar to itself, we must at least acknowledge in this case, that the difficulties will be equal ; and we can no more account for the one than we can comprehend the other. But, when to this simple state of vegetation, which we have supposed, we add that power of multiplication which it possesses, and which we constantly perceive in the production and re-production of grain ; the difficulties which approach us are most decidedly on the part of vegetation, while the doctrine of the resurrection stands, comparatively, unembarrassed with any obstacles which can forbid belief.

If the power and process of vegetation were only known in theory ; and if that theory had asserted, that one grain of wheat was capable of producing another new grain by the dissolution of its component parts ; if this, I say, had been asserted in theory only, without any correspondent fact to verify the declaration, the assertion would even in that case have had greater improbabilities to overcome than the doctrine of the resurrection has now. For, as nothing of a similar nature would have preceded it in point of fact and time, even the possibility of realizing such a theory would be rendered doubtful, and scepticism might have smiled at the idle vision, with the same Sadducean sneer, that it now bestows upon the notion of a resurrection of the dead.

But, if in that early period which we have sup-

posed, the asserters of future vegetation, proceeding further in their speculations, had declared, that by some incomprehensible, but prolific power existing in nature, one grain of wheat should actually produce *sixty*, or *one hundred grains*, of equal magnitude and beauty with itself; and this too, through a process which threatened the inevitable destruction of all; I cannot doubt but sceptical men, forming their calculations from mere possibility, would have exploded such a declaration as something too romantic and visionary to occupy a rational mind. For as the certainty of vegetation could not in this case, have been realized by fact, which is the most infallible demonstration of theory; there could have been no foundation, on which the mind could rest to form its calculations on the possibility of such an issue;—a foundation, which is in the case of the resurrection, all nature annually supplies by analogy.

Hence then it follows, that more probability must now rest on the side of the resurrection, if it were to be asserted that one human body should produce sixty, or one hundred bodies, of equal magnitude and beauty with itself, from that which is now sown in the earth, to be the germ of future life; than could, in the case supposed, have rested upon the vegetation and production of grains the certainty of which is demonstrated by fact. For, had an objection been stated against the possibility of the fact, in the case of vegetation; as nature could have furnished no analogy in its favour, the objection must have remained in all its force; and

plausibility must have rested on the side of incredulity, and have given a sanction to error without affording it any defence. But, were it now to be asserted, that one human body shall produce *sixty*, or *one hundred*, in the great harvest of human nature, as we have the analogy of vegetation before us, the fact itself would be rescued from the charge of being *an impossibility* ; and, on that account, when compared with vegetation, in its primary state, must have a decided claim upon our belief.

Under these circumstances, and this view of the comparison, though the doctrine of the resurrection has been placed under disadvantages which have no existence, the result even under these forbidding circumstances appears highly favourable ; and the fact has every advantage over that which is annually accomplished, with which it has been compared.

If then that which is the more improbable of the two cases be actually accomplished ; have we just reason to remain in doubt about that which is the less ? If the mysterious multiplication of grain annually takes place for the use and support of man ; can we really disbelieve the certainty of those changes which shall take place in man himself ; for whose benefit all other changes have been made ; and to whose purposes vegetation has been made invariably subservient ? Surely, such conclusions cannot result from the decisions of reason. The events which have already taken place, demonstrate the possibility of the fact, and deprive infidelity of those arguments which are necessary to urge us to disbelieve.

Hitherto the comparison has been considered under the supposition, that one body will produce *one hundred* ; and even in this light, admitting the supposition to have been founded upon fact, the process of nature will furnish us with ample instances to justify our belief. For, though we might plead that we know not how a fact so strange should be accomplished ; yet the want of ability to comprehend, can no more be admitted as an argument against the resurrection under all these disadvantages, than the same circumstance can be admitted as an argument against the productions of the soil. In the process of nature, we have placed before us the certainty of the fact, in the case of vegetation ; and this certainly becomes a presumptive argument in favour of the great event which yet remains to be verified by accomplishment ; probability, therefore, directs us in our decisions, and just analogy removes the hindrances to our belief. ✱

But if we wave these conclusions and that comparison, which, for the sake of argument, have been adopted, and turn our thoughts to the doctrine as we really expect to find it verified by fact, namely, that one individual body sown in weakness, shall be one individual body raised in power ; the argument, drawn from the analogy of vegetation, appears in favour of the resurrection, with the most decided superiority. For, while the multiplication of grain clogs vegetation with difficulties, which nothing but fact could overcome : we have in the case of the resurrection but one obstacle, and even this appears to have been removed by analogy drawn from a

simple process of nature, putting forth her prolific influence and power.

The apparent corruption, to which a grain when deposited in the earth is exposed, and which it actually undergoes, is demonstrated by fact, to be nothing more than the removal of *exuviae* which is necessary to the dawns of latent life. And, in like manner we may reasonably presume, that the portion of immoveable matter which now constitutes the identity of the body, and is destined to become the germ of future life, will vegetate in the grave when disencumbered of all the particles of flesh and blood which now inclose and surround it. And if analogy may be permitted to become our guide, we may justly infer, that it will ripen through the mysterious process of dissolution, till the hour appointed for the general resurrection, when it shall come forth a glorious body to remain for ever: and, leaving behind it those extraneous parts, which are essential to our existence here, but inapplicable to our future mode of being, it shall be cemented to its immaterial partner, in an union that shall never end.

If we turn our thoughts in a retrospective manner to the original ancestors of man, and look back to a period anterior to the production of grain; we cannot but conclude that they must have been precisely in the same situation with respect to their opinions of vegetation, and the resurrection of the human body, when both cases are considered in the abstract only. But, in a relative view, their descendants have a most decided advantage. They could have had no guide from the analogy of nature, to induce

a belief, that what was once deposited in the earth and consigned over to corruption, would ever spring forth anew ; whereas the fact is annually exhibited before us ; and we are taught to believe that what has been thus accomplished in the case of grain, will be accomplished also in the case of our bodies at the resurrection ; and by the same power which hourly bids all nature vegetate, and planetary worlds revolve.

To such comparisons and sentiments it may perhaps be objected, “ That the vegetation returns at regular and stated periods ; and that those periodical returns of seasons furnish the mind with evidence, on which to rest its expectations and belief.” How plausible soever this objection may appear, it is evidently founded upon a local and contracted survey. Encircled with appearances, we may permit it to operate upon our minds ; but when placed upon its proper foundation, it will be found fallacious, inapplicable, and absurd.

Had man been in existence when vegetation first began, he could have had no knowledge from fact, of those regular returns of seasons which we experience ; and consequently the argument now before us, could not then have applied, because it could not have had any existence. It was only a lapse of stated periods that could have suggested to them those ideas, on which the objection is founded ; but, which could then have had no influence whatever upon their minds. And, so repugnant must this fact then have been to all human modes of abstract

reasoning, that nothing but ocular demonstration could have determined in favour of these certainties which now appear.

And indeed, if we only alter the æra and bring home the case to the present day, it will appear, precisely the same. If God were to create a man at this moment in a state of perfect maturity, with all his faculties and intellectual powers in perfect bloom, but at the same time totally ignorant of the productions of nature; would this man, I would ask, have any idea of the powers of vegetation? Could he conceive the thing possible, that one grain should be capable of producing another, and that through the very medium which proved its destruction? It is a self-evident case, that under these circumstances, nothing but time or information could have communicated to him this knowledge.

In relation to the resurrection alone, we are now precisely in the same situation. The first man indeed that was actually created, must have been in darkness with respect to the production of grain, until the first harvest had made its appearance. But we, having had experience of the fact, pursue a train of analogical reasoning, which we transfer to the resurrection of the body; and obtain through this medium a species of evidence which impresses conviction on our reasoning powers.

We are now in the infancy of our being; and we look forward to a future harvest, with a pleasing commixture of certainty and hope. We walk, with respect to rational evidence, in the twilight of our future day, upon those margins which divide darkness

from light, while they apparently connect them together. In this region we stumble perhaps over a thousand errors, which might have been easily avoided, if our organs had been more acute, our understandings more penetrating ; or, if God had thought proper to give us light, where, for wise ends, he has permitted us to walk in shade. But, when these shadows shall be dispersed, and the great harvest of human nature shall arrive ; when “ beauty immortal shall awake from the tomb,” and the great enemy of man shall be destroyed ; then shall we behold the various movements of almighty power and goodness towards us, which we cannot now fully comprehend ; and, probably, trace through all its parts, that perfect analogy which subsists between the happy subject of illustration which St. Paul has chosen, and the resurrection of the body from the sleep of death.

SECT. II.

That all Objections usually advanced against the Doctrine of the Resurrection, may be advanced against the Doctrine of Vegetation.

THERE is, perhaps, in the vast empire of created nature, scarcely any subject to be found more appropriate in all its parts, to illustrate the important doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, than the production of a plant from grain which St. Paul

has so happily selected. (1 Cor. xv.) The objections, which may be advanced against the former, are alike applicable to the latter ; but in this case fact has deprived them of all their force.

However plausible such objections may be in themselves, which will apply with equal force, against the process of vegetation, and the resurrection of the dead ; it is evident that they must be delusive and unsound. The actual existence of vegetation proves, that all objections against it, however specious, must necessarily be fallacious ; and this circumstance furnishes us with a strong presumptive evidence, that the application of these objections to the resurrection must assuredly be unjust. For, certain it is, that in proportion as the analogy between the resurrection of the body, and the production of grain can be established ; every argument of a partial nature must be abolished ; and, while the actual existence of vegetation demonstrates its certainty, those arguments which are of a general nature can no longer apply. And, if neither general nor particular arguments will apply ; if those which are general, are refuted by the existence of vegetation, and those which are particular by the analogy which subsists between the resurrection and the production of grain ; all our objections immediately vanish, and the presumptive evidence which we draw from the certainty of vegetation, will establish the doctrine of the resurrection upon a basis not easily to be destroyed.

It is, probably, on these considerations that arguments of a general nature are rarely brought against

the resurrection of the dead. In the visible productions of nature they would meet a decided answer, and be immediately defeated in their primary design. But, where an objection can be started on the ground of incongruity between the process of vegetation and the resurrection; it affords the most favourable opportunity for attacking the doctrine; and it is from this quarter that the most plausible objections, and the most specious arguments are advanced. If, therefore, the resemblance between the production of grain and the doctrine in question;—between the doctrine of St. Paul, and the examples which he has chosen to illustrate it, can be established; every objection which can be raised must be resolved into a declaration, that *it surpasses our comprehension*; while the fact itself, in the productions of nature, will afford us perpetual evidence of certainty, till seed time and harvest, till cold and heat, till day and night shall be no more.

It is, perhaps, from a persuasion of incongruity between vegetation and the resurrection, that it has been asserted, that “the time while the seed is deposited in the earth, can bear no proportion to the length of that period, during which the body is deposited in the grave.” In point of duration, I grant that there is no proportion; but I cannot conceive that this circumstance will add any weight to the objection before us. Even different species of the vegetable tribes vary in the periods of their continuance in the earth before they vegetate; the example of no one species can determine the necessary

duration of another, or fix those lines beyond which the powers of nature shall cease to operate. ✕ Much less then can we presume, from our knowledge of vegetation, where we thus behold one species so considerably differing from another, to fix the length of that period in which the body must be lodged in the grave, before it can be ripened for the harvest of mankind.

That certain portions of time elapse, during which both the grain and the human body are deposited in the earth, before either discovers any signs of returning life, is a truth which no one can deny; and the only point, which can create a difference in opinion, is, *how far these portions of duration ought to fix the limits of each other?*

If God be able to preserve the germinating quality of a grain of wheat, though but for one day, while the component parts of the grain itself are sinking into a state of dissolution, which no man can deny, he can in the same manner preserve it for two days; and if so, he can for the same reason, preserve it for two months, for two years, or for two centuries. And, the selfsame power operating upon the selfsame substance, can produce, whensoever it pleases, the same effect, through all the varied modes of possibility; without having any respect whatever to the limits of duration.

From hence then the analogy will hold good, in the application of this principle to the preservation of those parts, which shall constitute our future bodies. For, as God preserves the germinating

power of the grain, when sown in the earth, through a given period; he can upon the same principle preserve the body through the same extent of time. And, as God can and actually does preserve the grain for several months, before it appears in the future harvest; we cannot doubt his power to preserve the human body in the grave, through the same extent of duration.

And if, when both seed and body are deposited in the earth, God should be pleased to suspend the process of future life in either; no one, who will admit his power to be infinite, can doubt his ability to accomplish that design; nor question his ability at the same time, to preserve the germinating qualities of both, while the component parts of each are scattered abroad and permitted to wander in a state of dissolution. And, if God can suspend the process of vegetation for one month, while he preserves the germinating quality perfect and entire; he can preserve it for one year, for five hundred, or for any given period which lies within the reach of numbers.

So far as these observations apply to grain, we are, perhaps, ready to give them our assent; but even here we admit the probability of the case, from the partial certainty which we have presented to us in fact; but beyond this scepticism of the human mind, the fact itself will hardly permit us to pass. It is nevertheless certain, when we view these probabilities in their abstract nature; that they are not exclusively confined to the vegetative powers of grain. Omnipotence can exert itself in every direction; and, since the human body includes not within its

nature properties more opposed to future life, than that grain which is annually re-produced; the length of time, during which the body is deposited in the earth, can form no argument to destroy the analogy between the resurrection and vegetation.

As, therefore, God can preserve the grain through any given period; he can without all doubt preserve the body through the same extent of duration. And the same power which can preserve all that is essential to either for two months; can, by extending the same exertion, preserve both through any given portion of duration. And this power, consequently, can preserve, during our repose in the grave, all that is necessary to constitute our future bodies, without involving any thing of greater difficulty, than is included in the preservation of that grain which is deposited in the earth for the ensuing harvest.

With God *one day must be as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*. The fleeting periods of perishing duration can, therefore, have no relation to him. Our local and finite notions must be applied to local and finite objects; while whatever is infinite must be removed at an infinite distance from these views.

If successive existence were to apply to God, he must have been older yesterday than he was the day preceding; and must have been younger on both than he is to-day, or than he will be to-morrow. There can be no way to avoid these conclusions; and yet if we once admit them, they will immedi-

ately lead us to deny the eternity of his existence. But, as such conclusions cannot be admitted, it follows, that successive existence cannot apply to him; and, consequently, *one day must be with him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

And, to that Being, with whom one day and a thousand years are alike, the influence of time can never reach. And consequently, whether it be a grain of wheat or a human body deposited in the earth; and whether it be for two days, or two thousand years, the nature of the case cannot be thereby affected. Every objection, therefore, which may be made against the incongruity of the cases, or the disproportion of time; whether it applies to the germinating parts of a grain, or to that immoveable portion of matter which constitutes the identity of the human body, must vanish into empty air.

It may, perhaps, in the next place be asserted, "that where the grain is deposited in the earth, it instantly begins to vegetate, which is a circumstance that will not apply to the human body;" and from hence it may be objected, that "between vegetation and the resurrection all analogy is destroyed." That the above observation will apply to the grain, when deposited in the earth, I believe no one will presume to doubt; but that this is a case which will not apply to the human body, is a point which I conceive it will be difficult to prove.

* Of the grand process of nature we know but a little part; and in a variety of cases, her movements are so slow that her active energies are almost imperceptible. How slow must the great progress of

nature have been, which has preserved the seminal parts of all the future embryos of the human race, through all the antediluvian ages ; and which has been perpetually at work to ripen these seminal parts into embryos ; and which still continues at work to ripen these embryos into man ? Who can trace the tardy movements of nature, in these, and in a variety of similar instances ? If then these tardy movements have been, and still are necessary, to ripen the seminal parts into an embryo, and this embryo into man ; why may we not rationally suppose, that the same tardy movements may continue to follow us in the grave ;—to ripen our bodies for their future harvest, and to prepare them for their destined habitations.

The identical moment in which nature commences her operations, is probably in all cases too refined for our discernment ; on which account we can never fix with exactness the original moment of action. Nothing, however, appears irrational in the supposition, that the preparation of our bodies for their future resurrection, commences immediately after the fleeting breath forsakes the trembling lips. It may begin in the same, or in a manner somewhat similar to that of a grain, which begins to vegetate as soon as it is sown in the prolific earth.

That we cannot perceive its movements in either case, I most readily admit. Our organs of perception are rather adapted to our present condition, than to those distant branches of action, which border on perpetual life. But, our want of perception in these cases, can no more be admitted as an argu-

ment against progressive movement ; than our want of comprehension in others can be admitted as an argument against fact.

The secret changes which imperceptibly take place in our bodies, while in the grave ; are, without doubt, all necessary to bring forth into perfection that body which shall be ; and the grave in all probability, is to us the great alembic of nature and of God, to fix the constitution of our future bodies, and to qualify those bodies for their immortal state. In this peaceful region of the dead, the latent powers and faculties, which in an embryo condition lie dormant, inactive, and imperceptible in our present state, may begin to put forth their energies and powers, in ways and modes of which we can form no adequate conception. Removed from the present life to a region more congenial to their natures, they may begin to bud in the cold embrace of death ; and put forth those blossoms which shall become visible in the hour of our resurrection, and flourish through eternity.

The various stages, through which we have already passed in our embryo state, have all conspired to produce this state of imperfect maturity, at which we are now arrived ; and from hence we may justly infer, that the great process will be carried onward during our repose in the grave, to ripen us for a more exalted state of perfection, which shall take place, when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Were it not for those changes, through which we

have already passed, our present state of perfection could never have been attained ; and but for those changes which death shall occasion in our bodies, the more exalted perfections of an immortal condition must be for ever placed beyond our reach.

The embryo faculties and powers, which were incorporated with our essence, from the formation of the ancestors of human nature, and which have lain dormant from Adam downward to the present hour ; have probably occupied a soil, which has been conducive to their preservation, but uncongenial to their growth. The progress of time may have matured those original powers which we now possess in all their plenitude ; and having accomplished its office, by rendering them subservient to the purposes of the present life, at the hour of death it may recal its operative influence, and consign over the body to the repose of the grave, in which state these embryo faculties may begin to emerge from an apparently torpid condition, and to put forth those active energies, which animal life was unable to produce.

Nor can these conjectural probabilities, how strange soever they may seem, appear repugnant to reason. The embryo state, through which we have already passed, in the early stages of our imperfect being, has given place to animal life, without which our animal functions could not have been performed ; while mere animal life, in its turn, has prepared the way for the more exalted refinements of rational existence. And, when stages of our being shall have accomplished the designs of God ; these faculties in like manner, we may reasonably

conclude, will partially subside in the great recess of nature ; and give through the repose of the grave, to other faculties, an opportunity to advance also towards completion. Then, when that body which shall be hereafter exalted to a state of perfect maturity, shall have its faculties and powers full blown ; the two distinct substances which constitute the essence of man, shall be united together, and go forth in an eternal world to remain in life for ever.

From these considerations, therefore, the conclusions appear more than probable, that all those objections which may be raised against the resurrection of the body, will in almost all instances, apply with equal, and sometimes with superior force against the process of vegetation. And from a principle of strict analogy, if this be permitted to become our guide, it will follow also, that the instant death shall close our eyes in darkness, and render our limbs stiff and motionless, the grand process of our future bodies shall commence, when they shall enter upon those changes which are necessary to mature them for the grand result of things.

SECT. III.

That the Analogy, between Vegetation and the Resurrection of the Body, is not destroyed by the Inequalities of Time, during which the Bodies of different Men repose in the Grave.

IN tracing the analogy between the process of vegetation and that of the resurrection, it is necessary

that both subjects be placed precisely in their respective situations ; since without this it will be impossible to investigate with accuracy, to compare with justice, or to decide with precision.

The process of vegetation appears before us in all its parts ; and we trace the connections and dependencies of its different stages, from its commencement to its consummation ; and erroneously transfer the rapidity of these movements to the process of the resurrection, though we can behold only its shortest stage through the whole progress of human life. Such circumstances conduct us to error, and the analogy appears inapplicable, because the comparison has been unfairly made. But, when we divest ourselves of these contracted views, and extend our observations to the vast extremes of human existence, including within this view all those varied stages which have already taken place, and which shall take place hereafter, from the primary formation of man, to the sound of the trumpet which shall awaken the dead ; the whole scene undergoes a change, and the horizon of human existence opens to our view.

Objections, indeed, from partial views, may occasionally be started ; and by our blending together erroneous circumstances, seeming incongruities may appear. But, when these erroneous circumstances and comparisons shall be removed, the incongruities which resulted from them must disappear ; and the analogy between the resurrection, and that process of vegetation by which an inspired writer has chosen to illustrate it, will stand forth in all its beauty.

Among those seeming incongruities, to which such improper views may have given birth, the following objection claims a most distinguished rank. It has been said, "that the periods of our repose in the grave, are so unequal with respect to different bodies of the same species, that no resemblance can be traced between this disproportion and the process of vegetation." And, in addition to the above it may be observed, "that no just reason can be assigned why so many ages should elapse, to ripen the bodies of the antediluvians, while some of the future generations of the world shall be matured in an inconceivably shorter time."

To these objections, could no other reason be assigned, it might be sufficient with respect to the human body to reply, that the comparison on which they are founded is so partial and circumscribed, that it includes but a small portion of human existence, considered in all its stages of graduated being. In vegetation we have seen the grain deposited in the earth, and we have seen succeeding harvests; but, in relation to the human body, we have only seen the grain committed to the soil, but we have not yet waited a sufficiency of time to experience a periodical return. We are continually moving onward, and through new scenes and changes which were never before experienced by us; we are urging our way in the midst of shadows to some distant goal; and evidently preparing for some event which lies before us in an eternal world. The great movements in our different stages of existence, have not yet performed their respective revolutions;

we therefore cannot comprehend with precision the different events which await us, until the present universe shall be swept aside.

In the present progress of nature, the alternate succession of day and night follows in regular vicissitudes ; yet we well know that a much slower and more important movement is equally discernible in all her works ; and these movements may be traced both in the relative and in the abstract nature of man. We well know that the fluctuating baubles of human life, can bear no more proportion to the great drama of human nature, considered under all its changes and revolutions, than the diurnal motion of the earth or the periodical changes of the moon, can to the revolutions of *Saturn* or of *Herschel*. Even the solar system, with all its appendages of planetary worlds, may perhaps have some secret and stated movements, in relation to other systems ; of which at present we can no more form any adequate conception, than we can of the manner of the production of a grain of corn, a blade of grass, or the resurrection of the body from the grave.

Of this, however, we are fully assured, that the same almighty power, which bounds, and fills, and encircles all created nature, is equal to every thing which is within the reach of possibility. And, while those facts which it has already accomplished, stand forth as sensible proofs to corroborate the certainty of those things which God has presented to our belief, they challenge our assent even in those cases where we can trace neither analogy nor relation. Such is the case, where revela-

tion stands abstractedly from all corresponding facts. But when, as in the case before us, we trace the perfect analogy which subsists between these facts which have been already accomplished, and those which we expect to take place hereafter;—when to this we add, that the greatest difficulties lie on the side of those events which have already taken place; the evidence forces itself upon us with an energy that prejudice only can resist.

To ripen the latent powers and faculties of our future bodies, that virtual existence in our progenitors, which we have already experienced; may be as necessary as our repose in the grave. And the length of that period, which elapses in the former state, may render it necessary that the latter should be of shorter duration; so that instead of affording any just ground for objection, it becomes an instance in which we join necessity to fact. Thus then, the longer the virtual properties of the human body exist in a seminal state, the shorter must be the period of duration necessary to ripen them, either in an embryo condition in the present life, or in the grave; and to prepare them through the stages of various being, to constitute that body which shall be raised in immortal vigour to be dissolved no more.

The immediate descendants of Adam could have slumbered but a short period in a seminal state; and, consequently, the period of their repose in the grave must be more considerable than that of the next generation. The inhabitants of the Patri-

archal ages approach towards a nearer proportion, between a seminal state of repose in the grave. While those who lived at the commencement of the Christian æra, may approach nearly to a middle state; and life may divide with them the whole of their varied existence, from the creation of Adam to the sound of the trumpet which shall call the dead to life; and leave an equal proportion, for a seminal state, prior to actual life, and an after state, during which the embryo of our future bodies shall ripen in the grave. Those on the contrary who have lived, and shall be in the subsequent ages of the world, having slumbered through all the preceding ages in a seminal state, will require but a shorter period of repose in the regions of corruption; while the last survivors of the human race, having passed through all the progenitors of mankind, *shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye*, and start forth into another mode of being, equally prepared for a more exalted region, with the bodies of *Adam, Seth, or Noah*.

Under these circumstances, which must be admitted to be hypothetically probable; the grand schemes of Providence will go on, without disproportion or incongruity. For, if to slumber in our progenitors, and to repose in the grave, be alike conducive to the perfection of that body which God shall give us hereafter; if both states be alike necessary to ripen our latent faculties, the progress of which is only interrupted by the short interval of our present life; we shall find upon a fair calcula-

tion, that all the individuals of the human race, of every age of the world, have had an equal share of duration in one or other of these modes of being, to ripen and prepare their future bodies for a more exalted condition of existence.

Hence then it follows, that the differences which subsist between the ages of the world, in which different individuals have lived, can have no influence upon the general theory; nor can these circumstances affect the analogy which subsists between the process of vegetation and that of the resurrection, any more than the quickness of vegetation in one species, can destroy the analogy between it and another, which moves more tardily; or, than the mountains and vallies which are scattered over the surface of the earth, can affect the rotundity of the globe. And, therefore, as no argument can be drawn from the inequalities of those periods, through which our bodies exist in all their modes, those which are drawn from partial and contracted views of the subject before us, must disappear, when we view the resurrection on an enlarged and more extensive scale.

The *possibility*, the *probability*, and the *moral certainty* which will appear hereafter in favour of the resurrection, when we come to consider these sources of argument which we have already explored; must far outweigh all the objections which can be brought against the analogy and the fact. The powerful intimations of nature must soften the

asperity of presumption; and urge us to admit the certainty of a doctrine, which is so clearly revealed in the written word of God.

It may, perhaps, be further objected against the analogy for which I contend, "that in the vegetation of a grain of wheat, its germinating powers begin to operate before any of its component parts are dissolved; but that in the case of the human body, dissolution visibly takes place, and its component parts are completely separated, without affording us any discovery of returning life." It is certain that the objection before us assumes more than ought, on the present occasion to be granted. For, whether in the case of grain the germinating powers begin to operate before the component parts are partially dissolved; or whether the dissolution of those parts precede the active energy of the germinating power; the objection cannot disannul the analogy between the process of vegetation and that of the resurrection of the body from the grave. The movements, which take place in the body, are too slow for our perception; and as this circumstance prevents our knowing whether dissolution precedes the active energy of any latent powers, or is subsequent to it; that knowledge which is necessary to give weight to the objection never can be obtained; and, consequently, the objection must be deprived of that foundation on which it is presumed to rest. It seems, however, highly probable that dissolution must precede the active energy of all vegetative powers in the case of grain.

If vegetation can commence, without any degree of dissolution or decay in the parent grain, no reason can be adduced from the nature of things, why dissolution should be necessary for its support in any subsequent period. For, if the process of vegetation can commence without any dissolution, it may proceed, and if it proceed it may continue, and if it continue it may be completed, without requiring, in any stage of its progress, the dissolution of that grain from whence it springs.

If dissolution be necessary in any stage, it must be necessary in every stage; because no reason can be assigned why it should be more necessary in one stage and not necessary in all. And, if in every stage of the process of vegetation, the dissolution of the parent grain be necessary to the active energy of the future germ; it clearly follows, that the activity of this germinating power, must be dependent upon that dissolution which preceded it, and, therefore, that dissolution on which the active powers of vegetation are dependent, must necessarily claim a priority of existence to those powers which are dependent on it. ✕

If the germ which vegetates, springs from the parent grain, which no one will deny; then the germ itself must either form a part of the identity of that parent grain, or it must be extraneous to it. In the former case, dissolution must be necessary to vegetation; and in the latter, the parent grain and the future germ can have no kind of natural connection with each other. To admit the latter case, is to admit that a parent grain includes with-

in its nature a future germ, and does not include it at the same time, which is a plain contradiction; and to admit the former, is to acknowledge the previous existence of dissolution, which totally destroys the ground on which the objection was raised. As, therefore, that germ which shall hereafter vegetate, must be now included in those component parts from whence the identity of the parent grain is denominated; it plainly follows, that this germ must form a part of its numerical identity, and consequently, that a partial dissolution must necessarily take place to produce that change which vegetation implies.

In the order of time, vegetation may indeed succeed so closely to the partial decay of the parent grain, that no interval may be discerned; but in the order of nature, dissolution must precede that which results from it, and leave a certain interval of duration, though it may be too minute for our faculties to discover. And if dissolution in the order of nature, precede the active energy of vegetation in a grain of wheat, or any other grain; no argument can possibly be drawn from the dissolution of its component parts, to support that objection which would destroy the analogy between the process of vegetation and the resurrection of our bodies from the grave.

The observations which have been thus applied to vegetation, may be easily transferred to the material part of man; in both cases dissolution must evidently precede vegetation; and the analogy holds good, how much soever they may vary from

each other in the rapidity of their movements, and the degrees of their dissolution.

The differences in these two cases before us, in the degrees of their dissolution, during the same given periods of duration, may produce in our minds a distinct association of ideas ; but this cannot alter either the things themselves which we thus contemplate, or the power of God. For, although, in the case of vegetation, we behold an efficacy of power, which in that of the human body we are unable to discern ; yet the same or similar movements may take place, though by more imperceptible gradations. This much, however, is certain, that in those branches of comparison which we now contemplate, no case can be adduced, which will destroy the analogy ; while those objections which are advanced against the resurrection of the body will all fall with superior weight upon the production of grain. And since in the production of grain all objections against it in all possible forms are refuted by fact, it is but rational to conclude that the same objections which are brought against the resurrection, are capable of being refuted in a similar manner ; since in both cases the circumstances are either equal, or in favour of the resurrection of the dead. The final result must therefore be, that the manner in which dissolution takes place, can never be made a groundwork for destroying that analogy which subsists between the case which we have compared ; nor can it afford one just objection against the resurrection of the body from the grave.

That God can call into existence a numerous

race of creatures endowed with all the forms of animal life, and with different degrees of intellectual powers in endless variety ; and that he can preserve the various forms of being given, will neither admit of doubt nor dispute, the theory itself being demonstrated by actual fact. ✕ That these beings must have had a beginning we are well assured, because nothing can be eternal but God ; and consequently there must have been a period when even creation could have had no existence. In that distant aera, creation must be presumed to be as remote from all experimental knowledge, as the resurrection of the body is now. If then we carry back our views to this important period, which I have supposed, and turn our thoughts to the creation of the world with all its inhabitants and appendages : and then turn to the ground on which we now stand, and contemplate the resurrection of the dead ; the probability in favour of the latter, exceeds that of the former in a much greater proportion than the light of the sun exceeds that of the lunar sphere. And more arguments can be advanced to prove creation impossible, than can now be advanced to prove the resurrection improbable, amidst all the objections that can be raised against it.

✕ And, even under present circumstances, with creation actually existing before us, and with the resurrection of the body, considered only as a hypothetical possibility, the difficulties on the side of the latter are not greater than on that of the former. And we are at as great a loss to account how the heavens and earth rose out of chaos, though their certainty

is now demonstrated by fact ; as we are to account for the resurrection of the body through all the various and astonishing changes which it must hereafter undergo. ✕

+ And even, without having any reference to creation in the abstract, if we only recur again to the process of vegetation, which is annually exhibited to our astonished views, in all the regular and irregular stages of advancement ; with all the experience of five thousand years ;—with all the endless varieties of natural productions, imported from every climate and every zone ;—with all the researches of philosophy ; together with all the boasted discoveries of the world, the wisest man alive can no more ultimately account for the most simple production of nature, than he can for the resurrection of our bodies, or the spirituality of them, when they shall be clothed with immortality and swallowed up in life. ✕

The doctrine of the resurrection, amidst all those difficulties with which it is encircled, comes forth in an apparently spontaneous manner to gratify universal desire and hope. That God would protract our existence, and protect us from sickness, calamities, and pains, is a desire which seems to have been interwoven with our constitutions in our primary formation ; and is one of those motives of the human bosom which appears to have survived the fall. But, it is a desire which nothing but death, and a resurrection from his cold embrace, seem able to accomplish. There is nothing but this which can translate us into a peaceful region, where human nature shall meet a perfect renovation in all its or-

ganical and intellectual powers;—a region, into which the body shall carry its final modification, and preserve all those essential parts, which will be necessary to its future station;—a region, where sickness, pains, and calamities, shall be known no more.

Whether perpetuity were added to the being of man in this life, or another is not for man to decide. * God has placed our permanent state of existence beyond the grave, and has made the gloomy territory of death the passage through which we must travel in order to attain it. The dissolution of our bodies is a necessary consequence of death; and both become morally necessary from the debilitated state of the human frame. * In addition to these circumstances, when we consider the present life as a state of probation, in which we act as candidates for one of retribution; the dissolution of the body becomes a necessary part of those changes, which must fit and prepare us for that state of being, where changes and probation must be alike unknown.

Were it not for dissolution, no alteration could probably take place in our condition; and then, infirmity, and pain, and discord, must accompany us through every stage of our existence; even if immortality were here communicated to man. But, when we behold death, and its attendant dissolution, interposing themselves between this world and the next; we see a final period put to our emaciated frames, and we behold a scene unfolding itself, in which our bodies shall appear refined,

ennobled, and exalted; and in which they shall be brought forth to inhabit a region, where all that survives of human nature shall exist in a more exalted mode, shall exhibit a state of consummate perfection, “safe from diseases and decline.”

SECT. IV.

Arguments to prove that the Resurrection of the Body can no more take place immediately, than Seed-time and Harvest can be blended together.

It has been repeatedly asserted, in the course of this work, that death is a natural effect of moral evil; and I flatter myself that these assertions have been satisfactorily proved, in several of the preceding sections. But, while the arguments which have been advanced to prove that moral evil must be destroyed, appear highly favourable to the resurrection of the body; they seem to open the door to an objection which may be stated thus. “If death be a natural effect of moral evil, if no natural effect can survive its cause, and moral evil be totally destroyed, the consequence must be an immediate resurrection of the body from the grave.”

Specious as this objection may appear, it is one which I flatter myself will admit of a solution; it is one, indeed, which has been already anticipated, and in part already answered. For, though it has been asserted, that no natural effect can survive its cause;—that moral evil is the cause of death;—

and that moral evil must be done away; yet there are two lights in which the destruction of moral evil may be considered.

In the first place, it may be said to be destroyed in relation to individuals, the instant that death takes place upon them, and separates their souls from their bodies. For, as probation must be confined to the present state, and as those laws by which we distinguish good from evil, must be confined to that mode of being in which we are capable of obedience and transgression; a removal from this state of existence must effectually change our condition, and resolve all into retributive certainty either of punishment or reward. Whenever, therefore, this change in our condition shall take place, in an individual sense; moral evil may be said to be destroyed.

Nevertheless, in a more universal sense, moral evil may be said to continue, so long as the present state of things shall remain unchanged. And, consequently, though it may no longer operate upon those individuals, whose bodies are lodged in the arms of death; yet the influence of moral evil must run parallel with mortality, and occasion that death which mankind must undergo. In this view, moral evil cannot be universally destroyed, while one mortal remains alive; and therefore the resurrection of the body cannot immediately take place.

But, even admitting the destruction of moral evil to take place, as in the first case supposed; it will not from thence follow that the resurrection must be an immediate event. St. Paul has told us, in rela-

tion to the process of vegetation, that the *body which is sown, is not quickened* (into future life) *except it die*; time therefore must evidently be necessary to the developement of the future plant, the future ear, and the future grain; which come forth in perfection when the future harvest shall commence. Since, therefore, progression becomes necessary to future completion, seed-time must necessarily precede those stages which are conducive to approaching perfection; and to suppose that harvest could blend with that condition which must necessarily be previous to it, is to make a supposition which is not only contradicted by fact, but which also involves a contradiction.

Neither will the case appear less improbable, or less absurd, if we make an application of these remarks to the resurrection of the bodies of the dead. Those portions of permanent matter in which I have presumed the identity of the body to consist, I have supposed also to be the germ of future life, which must necessarily, like the seed of some future grain, be in an embryo state, and consequently unprepared for its future habitation. Under these circumstances, the progress of time becomes necessary to call forth those latent powers which shall unfold themselves in our future bodies, so that they may be adapted to that condition of being which they must sustain for ever.

From the principles upon which I have proceeded it must be admitted, that this embryo state of our future bodies, may be in different stages of progression when deposited in the earth; and the spe-

cific quantity of time necessary to ripen those bodies which shall be, for that state of perfection to which they tend, must be determined by those previous periods, in which their constituent parts were lodged in a seminal state. And how various or multiform soever these stages might have been, they are evidently such as will suit the whole succession of time, and place the bodies of all the human race on an even scale. On this ground we can rationally conceive, how the general resurrection may take place in one and the same instant; though the bodies which shall rise had been deposited in the grave through all the preceding ages of the world.

The introduction of moral evil into the world I have already admitted to be the cause of death, and the primary cause of that dissolution which immediately succeeds. But as, when death takes place, and by separating soul and body, destroys the identity of man, moral evil must cease to act upon that individual; the latent powers must begin to operate, and move onward towards that perfection which the future body shall possess and enjoy through eternity.

But, as those parts of immoveable matter which constitute the identity of the body here, and shall be the germ of that which shall exist hereafter, must have been deposited in the grave in distant periods; so they must have been deposited in different stages of progression; and, consequently, must require different portions of duration in the grave, to ripen for the grand result of things. And,

as those bodies which were first deposited in the grave must require the longest time because they existed the shortest in a seminal state; so those which have been interred more recently, having been lodged a much longer period in their seminal state, will require a comparatively shorter season to bring them forth into a state of complete perfection. And, as that germ which shall constitute our future bodies must be in a state of immaturity, whensoever deposited in the grave; those ages become requisite to ripen it, which shall elapse from the time of its interment, until the sound of the trumpet shall awaken the dead. And, therefore, though moral evil be the cause of death, and though it cease when soul and body are separated from each other, it will be impossible that the body should immediately rise from the grave.

Nothing that is in embryo can be in a state of maturity. Maturity, therefore must be the work of progression; and progression in such cases, must be incompatible with instantaneous action. The germ in embryo cannot be matured, while it is in embryo, and while it is a germ; if it were so, it would no longer be a germ in embryo, but a germ in maturity, which in this view is a contradiction in terms. An embryo, it is true, may be perfect, *as an embryo*; but while it is an embryo, it must be distinct from that body which it shall hereafter constitute. And to suppose that which is an embryo of a future body, to be that future body in completion, is to suppose it to be what it is not, and what,

under existing circumstances it cannot be : in short, it is to suppose it to be an embryo and not an embryo at the same time. It must therefore follow, that the permanent principles of our bodies cannot be immediately raised ; though the cause of their being deposited in the grave be totally done away.

The germinating powers of its radical parts, may begin immediately to operate, because delivered from the primary cause which held them in a state of torpor and inaction ; but these radical parts cannot ripen into full perfection, until the time appointed when the sea and the grave shall give up their dead. Those portions of matter which constitute the identity of our bodies in the present life, and which will become the foundation of those which we shall possess for ever, must, when deposited in the grave, be destitute of that maturity which can alone ensure immortality. And this maturity cannot be attained, unless those bodies undergo those changes in the grave, through which the Judge of quick and dead hath appointed them to pass. But, when the bodies of the whole of Adam's posterity shall have moved through those evolutions which are necessary to ensure their immortality ; and shall have undergone those varied modes of being, which form so many links in the vast chain which ends in perfect existence ; then all, ripened with immortal energy, for an immortal state, shall come forth from the mansions of death, to sleep no more. And in this state, being reunited to their immaterial partners, they shall

enter upon those rewards or punishments which flow from the mercy and retributive justice of God.

SECT. V.

In which it is proved, That St. Paul, when illustrating the Doctrine of the Resurrection, by the Process of Vegetation, speaks the Language of Philosophy and Reason.

To illustrate the doctrine of the resurrection, by the analogy which subsists between it, and the process of vegetation, St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 35.) has stated this question,—*But some man will say, How are the dead raised up, and with what bodies do they come?* and in the following verses he has given this answer,—*Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body which shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain.*

However excellent this illustrative argument may appear, in the eye of unprejudiced reason, it is one of those excellencies which has met the common fate of almost every thing which is truly great; and has been exposed to censures of the most illiberal and acrimonious nature.

Thomas Payne, in his “Age of Reason,” has taken occasion to hold it up to ridicule and contempt, and without entering into the nature of the

comparison which the Apostle has made, or estimating the merit or demerit of the argument, which has been drawn from the general analogy subsisting between the two subjects, he has not hesitated to denominate St. Paul "*a fool*." Perhaps, when Thomas Payne dropped this expression from his pen, it was with him an *age of dogmatism*, as well as an *age of reason*; so that in this, as well as in a variety of other instances, he has strangely permitted his prejudice to eclipse the intellectual ray.

"Sometimes (observes Payne) Paul affects to be a naturalist, and to prove his system of resurrection from the principles of vegetation. Thou fool, says he, that which thou sowest, is not quickened except it die. To which one might reply in his own language, and say, thou fool Paul, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die *not*; for the grain that dies in the ground, never does nor can vegetate."* On this point St. Paul and Thomas Payne are fairly at issue, and the question is which of them is right.

It appears evidently from the face of the above quotation, that the Apostle's meaning has been either grossly mistaken, or wilfully misrepresented; because nothing can be more evident than this, that his language has been perverted to serve no good purpose. In the passage, which has been quoted from his page, the Apostle was not speaking of the annihilation of any simple substance, but of the

* *Age of Reason*, part the second, p. 73.

decomposition of compounded bodies; which two subjects have little or no connection with one another. The former must be for ever hindered from taking place by the simple preservation of being; but the latter can only be prevented by the permanency of the union, and adhesion of all the parts, of which that substance was composed. That the former shall take place, St. Paul never asserts; but that the latter annually occurs, is evident to every beholder; and by this obvious fact St. Paul has chosen to illustrate the state of the human body, during its repose in the grave, and its consequent resurrection.

The question, which is now before us, involves two distinct points; one of which relates to the identity of the substance itself, and the other to the identity of that modification, which the given substance might have assumed. The identity of the former never can be lost; because, though it may be perpetually divided, no one of its essential properties can possibly be either destroyed or changed. All that divisibility can possibly effect must relate to the arrangement of its parts; but no change in modification can ever effect identity. On the contrary, in all compounded bodies, every change which they undergo must affect their modification; and by a derangement of the composition, must eventually annihilate that identity, which consisted in the permanent union of all the parts.

In the subject, which is now before us, the above two identities are to be found; and to the distinc-

tion which exists between them, if we wish to comprehend the Apostle's meaning, it is necessary that we attend. It is this distinction which Thomas Payne seems entirely to have forgotten ; and by this means he has so blended these two identities together, as to have justly brought upon himself the charge of that folly which he, with equal injustice and indecency, has attributed to St. Paul.

When we take before us a grain, on which the Apostle has made his observation, we are instantly struck with the distinction I have made. We behold in almost one view, the identity of the substance itself, and the identity of that particular modification of it, from whence we obtained the idea of grain. The former of these must always be inseparable from matter, in what light soever we may view it ; while the latter as it applies not so much to existence itself, as to the particular manner of existence, may be totally destroyed, though the former remains unchanged and entire. Thus the identity of the grain is one thing, but the identity of the matter of which it is composed is quite another ; and of these two identities it is necessary that we should have distinct ideas, in order that we inform ourselves of which of these St. Paul speaks, before we can decide on the accuracy or inaccuracy of his expression.

That the Apostle speaks of the identity of the modification, and not of that of the matter itself, is evident from the manner in which he introduces the subject. "*That* (says he) *which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.*"

What (we would ask) is it that is sown? The answer is obvious, "*a grain.*" What, (we ask

again,) is not quickened? The answer is equally plain, "Vegetation which arises from that germ which is included in the composition sown, is not quickened into future life, except that body in which it is included, die :~~x~~ which body, in order that the germ may evolve itself, must be decomposed, and through this decomposition, its identity, which consisted in the stability of its modification, must be inevitably destroyed." ~~x~~

That St. Paul spoke of the grain which was sown, and not of the particles of which it was composed, is plain language which will admit of no controversy: If we deny this, it will be impossible to render his expressions any way intelligible; we must therefore assume it as an admitted point. ~~x~~ It must, therefore, be to the modification, and not the constituent parts of grain, that we must look for that *dying*, of which the Apostle speaks. ~~x~~

A grain of corn is that certain combination of primitive particles, so peculiarly modified as to give us that complex idea which we have of it; which complex idea is derived from that peculiar union which exists in the body modified. And no longer than that union continues can we annex to it an idea which is dependent upon it; and which must cease to exist upon the disunion of those parts which were previously combined.

Having thus before us this complex idea of a grain, arising from the mere combination of its parts, it is certain that this idea can continue no longer, than while those parts continue in union

with one another; because upon this union the idea is entirely dependent for its own existence. While, therefore, the parts thus combined, continue in union with one another; our idea of grain remains undestroyed; while a change in its modification and sensible qualities must annihilate the identity of which we speak, and our complex idea together.

Such then is the nature of the grain, to which St. Paul applies, for an illustration, which he has so happily employed in proving the resurrection of the dead.

Let us now suppose this grain to be deposited in the earth, and, through the grand process of nature, its parts dissolving into their elementary state. In this case, though the parts themselves lose not their own peculiar identities; yet they so far lose their original state of combination, that the grain is now no longer in existence. And, as our idea of the identity of this grain depended upon that combination of the parts which is now destroyed, so when this combination vanished, from that very instant our idea of it ceased to exist.

That the grain itself must be dissolved, will admit of no dispute; and no man perhaps will assert that its identity can continue, when the only combination of particles upon which it depended is destroyed. For, certain it is, that when that cause which gave being to our idea of identity is removed, that idea must vanish with it; because *being* was necessary to its preservation. If then the identity of a grain be actually destroyed, must not that identical

grain be inevitably dead? And is not this very grain, that of which St. Paul speaks, in the very passage which has been ridiculed by Thomas Payne? And if so, the sentiment of the Apostle is at once philosophical and just; and the contempt of Thomas Payne has been most egregiously misapplied.

St. Paul, in the place under consideration, confines his observations exclusively to the grain, without once adverting to the matter of which it is composed; and he considers the dissolution of its component parts, as particularly necessary to that vegetation which shall spring forth from the germ included in it. ✕ In this view, he justly concludes from the change of its modification, the destruction of its identity; and from hence expresses himself with an evidence not to be controverted with success, that every compounded body must be dead when its identity is no more. ✕ And consequently, that the self-same act, by which its parts are separated from one another, is the identical act through which its modification, which constituted its identity, is destroyed, and through which the grain that was sown completely dies.

How far the destruction of the constituent parts of a grain may be necessary to call forth the active energy of those vegetative powers, that are lodged in the germ of future life, which the parent body encloses; is remote from the present question. It is sufficient to my present purpose, to have vindicated St. Paul from the charge of absurdity, and the ap-

pellation of "fool;" and to have shewn the philosophical propriety of an expression, which Thomas Payne, instead of confronting with argument, has attempted to ridicule, and affected to despise.*

* It ought not to be admitted, that the subject of vegetation which St. Paul has so happily applied to the resurrection of the body, was first hinted by our Lord on a similar occasion. Hence he tells us, John xii. 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* Thus we find, in corroboration of the same sentiment, that even a greater than St. Paul is here.†

† After perusing this section, my friend Dr. A. Clarke sent me the following illustration of John xii. 24. which applies so forcibly to the subject of this inquiry that I make no apology for inserting it, as I am sure it will recommend itself to the good sense and piety of every reader.

"It appears quite evident to me that St. Paul borrowed his simile and illustration of the resurrection of the human body from the words of our Lord, John xii. 24. This simile properly understood, is in both cases so physically and philosophically correct as to carry conviction to the most insensible mind. I shall give you a paraphrase which I extract from my MS. notes on the above passage.

Unless the grain of wheat which falleth into the ground die, it remaineth alone, ver. 24.

"Our Lord compares himself to a *grain of wheat*, his death to a *grain sown* and decomposed in the ground; his resurrection to the *blade* which springs from the dead grain, and which brings forth an abundance of fruit. As if he had said, *I must die to be glorified, and unless I am glorified I cannot establish a glorious church of Jews and Gentiles upon earth.* In comparing himself thus to a *grain of wheat*, our Lord shews us, 1. The *cause* of his death: the *order* of God, who had rated the redemption of the world at this price: as in nature he had attached the multiplication of the corn to the death of the grain. 2. The *end* of

his death; the redemption of a lost world; the justification, sanctification, and glorification of men; as the multiplication of the corn is the end for which the grain dies. 3. The *mystery* of his death, which we must credit without being able fully to comprehend; as we believe the dead grain multiplies itself, and we are nourished by that multiplication, without being able to comprehend *how* it is done. The greatest philosopher that ever existed could not tell how one grain became 30, 60, 100, or a thousand, how it *vegetated* in the earth; how earth, air and water, its component parts, could assume such a form and consistence, emit such odours, or produce such tastes. Nor can the wisest man on earth tell how the bodies of animals are *nourished* by this produce of the ground; how wheat for instance, is assimilated to the very nature of the bodies that receive it; and how it becomes flesh and blood, nerves, sinews, bones, &c. All we can say is, the thing is *so*; and it has pleased God that it should be so, and not *otherwise*. So there are many things in the person, death, and sacrifice of Christ, which we can neither explain nor comprehend; all we should say here is, it is by this means that the world was redeemed, through this sacrifice men are saved: it has pleased God that it should be so, and not otherwise.—Some say, our Lord spoke this according to the philosophy of those days, which was by no means correct. But I would ask, has ever a more correct philosophy on this point appeared? Is it not a physical truth, that the whole body of the grain dies, is converted into fine mould, which constitutes the first nourishment of the embryo plant, and prepares it to receive a grosser support from the surrounding soil; and that nothing *lives* but the germ which was included in this body, and which must die also, if it do not receive from the death or putrefaction of the body of the grain, nourishment, so as to enable it to unfold itself? Though the body of our Lord died, there was still the germ, the quickening power of the divinity, which reanimated that body, and stamped the atonement with infinite merit. Thus the merit was multiplied, and through the death of that one person, the man Christ Jesus, united to the Eternal Word, salvation was procured for the whole world. Never was a simile more appropriate; nor an illustration more happy or successful."

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENTS TENDING TO PROVE THAT THE
IDENTITY OF THE HUMAN BODY MUST CON-
SIST IN SOME GERM, OR STAMEN, WHICH RE-
MAINS IMMOVEABLE.

SECT. I.

*In which it is argued, That the Identity of our fu-
ture Bodies does not consist in all the numerical
Particles, nor in the Majority of them, which
have occasionally adhered to the Vital Mass, in
any given Portion of the present Life.*

ON a subject so abstruse as that of the identity of the human body, it is natural to conceive that difficulties will arise from various quarters, and press upon us in a variety of forms. The subject itself is involved in much obscurity; it eludes in many cases, our most acute researches; and requires faculties more penetrating and vigorous, than any which we now possess. The rays of light that are diffused through the gloom, with which we are encircled, are however sufficient to convince us of its certainty; the difficulties, therefore, which perplex us, arise from subordinate causes, but the fact itself remains unimpeached.

Nor will these difficulties admit of satisfactory solutions in all their parts, though we vary the modes of our inquiry, and suppose the identity of the body to be lodged in either of those combinations of matter, in which alone it can possibly be placed. For, whether we suppose the identity of the body to consist in *all the numerical particles which have been occasionally united to the vital system, or in some stamen which is lodged within its recesses ; or in the majority of those particles which formed the body when it sunk into the grave ;* still many difficulties will remain, which we cannot fully comprehend. We shall meet in each case with obscurities which we cannot pierce, with obstacles which we cannot properly surmount, and in some cases with arguments which will forbid our further progress, because they will involve us in contradictions.

But these difficulties can lay no embargo on the exertions of an inquiring mind. For, though they are attended with embarrassments which are hostile in their appearances, and contradictory in their issues ; they will discover the avenues of error, and direct us from what is wrong to what is right.

The works of man we may understand ; but those actions which no power less than infinite can accomplish, it is but reasonable to believe, that no wisdom less than infinite can fully comprehend. We discover the most obvious demonstrations of these truths in all the varied works of nature ; the periodical vicissitude of day and night, and the re-

volutions of the seasons, oblige us to admit those truths, which excite our astonishment, but leave us in the shade. For, in the vast empire of nature, all our boasted researches into her secret movements, our developement of her recesses, and our investigation of causes and effects, are not only defective in their nature, but chiefly applied to the mere superficies of things. The primary causes of all lie concealed from mortals; and the utmost stretch of our most penetrating faculties can rise but little higher than probability; and must finally rest in the acknowledgment of a self-existent cause, whose nature and manner of existence are very little known. Our inquiries, therefore, in all these cases must be, how far should probability be permitted to operate; to produce conviction and to obtain belief? Without doubt, it is our indispensable duty, amidst a variety of possible cases, which are involved in difficulty, to select that which appears farthest removed from absurdity and error. It is this alone which can give it the features of truth, arrest the mind in its progressive movements, and present a rational claim to our belief.

If the human body rise from the grave, its original sameness, in whatsoever it consisted, must be preserved; because, without this it is not the former body but totally another. And it is equally certain that in whatsoever this sameness consists, the cases which are possible, cannot be infinite; on the contrary, they must be confined within a narrow compass, and reduced to a diminutive number; and

this number which is but small, has been already hinted, in the second paragraph of this section.

If we admit, as was supposed in the first case, that all the particles which were once united to the corporeal mass, must be again united to it, to form the constituent parts of the body in the resurrection; we shall be obliged to admit, in many cases, bodies so vast, that the idea itself is an outrage on probability. The size must increase with the progress of years, and age must be the criterion from whence magnitude must be denominated. In addition to this, if all those particles which have occasionally adhered to our bodies, must be again reunited to their respective systems; our notions will immediately become inconsistent with those ideas which we have of the transmigration of particles from one body to another; because it will be impossible for the same particles to incorporate with two or more bodies at the same time. For, if any given particle incorporate with two or more bodies, and every particle be necessary to constitute the sameness of each body, the presence of every such particle must be equally necessary in both cases, to constitute the identity of those bodies to which it had occasionally adhered. But, since the cases which are thus absolutely necessary, must be absolutely impossible; it will follow that the identity of our future bodies, cannot consist in the re-union of all those particles, which were once vitally united to the corporeal mass.

We may easily conceive, while the particles in-

corporate with no other body, that no difficulty will occur, however they may be disposed of, or in what forms soever they may be combined. We may suppose them to wander through different regions ;—they may “ float in the breeze, or shiver in the grass ;” they may still retain their relative situations, without militating against that theory which I oppose, or for which I contend. They may in either case, at the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, repair to their respective systems, incorporate and adhere for ever.

But there are cases, in which these theories will wear different aspects.

That cannibals, who feed on human flesh, may live by that nutrition, I flatter myself will be denied by none ; and, if they live by nutrition derived from human flesh, some particles of the devoured body must incorporate with the body of the cannibal ; for, how any nutrition can be otherwise derived, it will perhaps, be impossible to say. The continuance of life must depend upon nutrition ; and the human system must be supported by particles, which are derived from that source. But, if those particles which are thus introduced into the system of a cannibal, were once some of those particles which constituted in part, that body which had been devoured ; it is certain that these particles must have formed, in part, the identity of that first body, and must finally resort thither to form anew its identity in the day of the resurrection. And, if each and every particle must be again united to the body

which it once inhabited, in order to constitute its general identity ; these particles must be recalled from the body of the cannibal, to rejoin their primitive system.

But were we to admit this to be the case, new difficulties will arise on the formation of the body of the cannibal, from which they must be taken. For, if the identity of the body, *eaten*, depends upon the collection of every particle which had been vitally united to it ; so, in like manner, the body of the cannibal must also require each and every particle, which had at any period been vitally united to it, in order to constitute and form its future identity. The reasons are equally good, in both cases ; and the claims and necessities wear on both grounds the same aspect ; but of this we are well assured, that the claims of one body must be disappointed, because a compliance with both is absolutely impossible. We have now before us two bodies, namely that of a cannibal, and that of a person devoured by him, laying equal claims to the same particles ; acting alike under equal necessities, and founding their respective claims on equal reasons. But, of this truth we are well assured, that the same particle cannot enter into the composition of both bodies. And, let it adhere to which body soever it may ; the deserted body, having lost those particles which were once vitally united to it, and which on that account are necessary to form its future identity, must remain in an unformed and imperfect state. And being thus deprived of its identity, it can have no share in a future resurrection from the dead ; and, conse-

quently, all the other constituent parts of this body must be swept away with the common mass of matter never dignified with life. And, as these consequences cannot be avoided, while we admit that all the particles which were at any time united to the body, are necessary to form its future identity ; and, as these consequences will involve us in the contradictions above stated, I think this final conclusion is inevitable—that all those particles which were once united together, cannot be necessary to constitute either the identity of the present body, or the identity of that body, which shall be hereafter.

To avoid the absurdities which are inseparable from the above theory, it has been said, “ That all the particles which were once united, are not necessary to constitute the future identity of our bodies ; but only those which were united to the body at the time of its being deposited in the grave.” But this supposition has its difficulties ; difficulties which will appear as great, and perhaps as contradictory as the former ; and therefore, equally insurmountable. Let us suppose that the identity of the body of a cannibal, consists partially in those particles which are united to it in that moment when life ends : and, that this cannibal had drawn his nutrition from human flesh. In the case before us, we are drawn, in part, to the same conclusions which we have seen above.

We have now before us a certain number of particles, in the body of the cannibal at the time of his death, which were taken from the bodies of those who had been eaten by him : and which were taken

from them at the time of their death, of which this was the occasion. In this case, the body eaten will have a right to those particles, to form its future identity, upon the supposition above given. And, as these particles were lodged in the body of the cannibal, at the moment of his death; an equal claim will arise from that quarter also. In these cases, the two bodies, nameiy, that of the cannibal, and that of the body eaten, will both have the same identical particles, even at the moment of their deaths. And, if the identity of the body consists in the sameness of these particles which were united to the system at the moment of its death; the identity of one of these bodies must be inevitably lost, since it is impossible that the same particles should constitute the identities of both bodies at the same time. And, therefore, the difficulty will not be rendered less, by our supposing that those particles only, which were united to the body at the moment of its death, shall constitute the identity of that body which shall bloom beyond the grave.

To counteract the force of these reasonings, should it be asserted, "That not the whole, but only a *part* of these particles, indiscriminately taken, were lodged in the cold repository of death, will be sufficient to constitute the identity of the future body; though myriads of particles should be lost, and though myriads more which are perfectly new should incorporate with the future system;" should these things be asserted, the absurdities to which they lead are not remote. Nor will it be difficult

to infer, that there may be as many distinct identities, as there are parts which are capable of constituting them. For, if out of that almost infinite number of particles, which are at all times necessary to constitute the body of man, any *indiscriminate* number may be taken ; and if, notwithstanding the adhesion of particles, which were never before in the system, this indiscriminate number will be sufficient to constitute the identity of our future bodies ; another given number, indiscriminately taken from the same system, partaking of the same nature, and inhering in the body also when it dropped into the grave, will have the same right. This second number may also constitute another identity of the same body, and we shall then have two identities of the same body, which is an absurdity that surpasses, if possible, a palpable contradiction. I therefore think the conclusion from hence evident also, that particles *indiscriminately* taken from the mass of which our bodies were composed, either at death, or through any previous portion of their progress in life, must be insufficient to constitute the identity of those bodies, which we hope to possess beyond the grave. For, as these particles are supposed to be indiscriminately taken, an equal number of equal particles must be equal ; and the same conclusions which will result in one case, must, under like circumstances result in another, and result in all. And, certain it is, that that theory which will lead to a conclusion too gross to be admitted, and too contemptible to be pursued, must in itself be inevitably wrong.

It may perhaps be said "that it is not any given number of particles, indiscriminately taken, that is here meant ; but the *majority* of those particles which were united to the body at its death, which shall constitute its identity in a future world."

That this is a removal of the last difficulty, which we have considered, I am ready to admit ; but it is only a removal of it to another stage. In another stage it will appear again to meet us, and meet us in a shape equally formidable to that in which we have already seen it ; and appear in every mode equally irreconcilable with those truths which can never oppose one another.

If, out of the whole mass of matter which forms our mature bodies in the present life, a certain number of particles shall be either selected or indiscriminately taken, which amounting to a majority of the whole in point of number, shall constitute the identity of our future bodies ; it must then be admitted that all besides are useless in point of identity, and therefore can have no necessary connection with it. And, as the identity of the body is now presumed to consist in a majority of particles ; it must on the other side of this question be admitted also, that all those particles which are not included in the majority which forms the identity of the body, must be insufficient to produce or constitute another identity of that body ; because it is absolutely impossible that two majorities of particles can exist at one and the same time. And, as it is impossible that two majorities can arise from the constituent parts of the

same body, or exist at the same time ; it plainly follows, that the difficulty we have lately considered must be removed by the present supposition. But other difficulties still remain.

Let us now suppose those particles which were not included in the majority, to be either totally annihilated, or entirely removed ; which must be admitted in the resurrection, if the majority of particles constitute the identity of that body which shall rise from the grave. Under these circumstances, and in this case, I would ask—In what does the identity of the future body consist ? It cannot be the majority of particles ; because to constitute our idea of *majority*, the whole mass is necessary, out of which the majority is taken. And, as the minor number is now annihilated, or perfectly removed, the removal or annihilation of this minor number must be that very act, by which our idea of majority will be totally destroyed. And therefore, if our idea of *majority* be totally destroyed, by the removal of the minor number, it plainly follows that the identity of our future bodies cannot be denominated from that which has now no longer any existence. All therefore that can be included in the supposition, under the present consideration, is,—“That the identity of our future bodies must hereafter consist in the union of each and every particle which shall rise from the grave ; and which, taken in connection with the constituent parts of the former body, constituted in that general union, the majority of the whole ; but which, now the minor number is re-

moved, must in itself be changed from a majority to a whole."

But even admitting this to be the case, can the identity of this future body be the identity of the past? Can that body, the identity of which consisted in a majority of particles, be the same with this, the identity of which consists in the whole? Is a whole, and a part of that whole, the same? Or, can the identity of the same body consist in two distinct things in the different stages of its being: Can it consist in things so distant as a *part* is from a *whole*, out of which that part is taken? If it be the same body, with its identity consisting in two distinct things, so distinct as a *whole* is from a *part*, we must suppose the actual transfer of identity. In this case, the same body in distinct modes of its being must have two identities; it must be the same with two samenesses, i. e. it must be the same and not the same at the same time.

Either these absurdities must be admitted, or they must not. If admitted, we must bid farewell to argument and reason; if not admitted, it will plainly follow, that the identity of the body cannot consist in the majority of the particles of that body which was sown in weakness, but which shall be raised in power; because it involves inexplicable difficulties, and finally terminates in absurdities and contradictions.

If a majority of those particles, which constituted the body in its former or present state, be that which constitutes the future identity of the same body when it rises from the grave, identity must be capable of

being transferred from one system of atoms to another. But how identity can be capable of any kind of transfer is to me a difficulty which I cannot solve.

That identity, in this case, must be capable of being transferred, may be demonstratively inferred from the comparative estimate which may be made between infancy and maturity ; and those intermediate stages which mark the progressive life of man. It will scarcely be asserted, I presume, by any person, that a full grown man has no more particles in his body than he had when an infant at the breast ; neither, I conceive, will it be imagined that a majority of those particles which this man in maturity possesses, were brought with him from an embryo state, or from the first dawn of infancy. To suppose this, is to violate the evidence of all our senses, and to place a visionary theory in direct opposition to fact.

That an infant brings with it into this world an identity of body, which it never loses ; will, I conceive, be denied by none. If we deny this, it will be incumbent on us to perform a still more difficult task, and to point out the particular time when this identity of body is first acquired ; for, that an identity of body does exist, we cannot doubt. As therefore this identity of body does exist, it must either be coeval with our being, or be acquired at some subsequent period. If the identity of our bodies be acquired in some subsequent period of their existence, it follows, that the body must have had an existence previously to its own identity ; and to suppose that any thing can exist previously to that

which constitutes its being, is a palpable contradiction. Therefore, in whatsoever the identity of the body consists, it must necessarily be in something which is coeval with the body;—it is the same which the body possesses through all the changes of life; it must remain incorruptible in the grave, and continue through all eternity.

Should we deny these positions, we must suppose that identity itself can be lost in diversity; and if so that which we call the same person must be acknowledged to be another; and if another, it is not the subject of our present inquiry. But where the person or body is the same, there identity must be preserved; since it is from thence alone that sameness both of body and person is denominated and known.

If the particles, which constituted the human body when first it received its identity, were more in number than those which it possessed when it retired from life, we might, without much difficulty behold the majority of these particles, and the identity of the body, moving onward in progression together, without either transfer or change. The extraneous particles, in this case, might either be incorporated with the body, or thrown off to mix with their different elements; while new particles might succeed, and neither the identity of the body, nor those particles which gave it stability, would undergo either change or decay. But instead of this the reverse is the case.

The particles which belong to the embryo in the womb, or which form the body in the first stages of human infancy, are, comparatively speaking, but few

in number ; and the greater part of these few are undergoing perpetual changes. New particles are continually adhering to the original system ; so that in a state of manhood few, very few are to be found which composed the human body, when in an infant state, or when an embryo in the womb. Yet, in the midst of these changes, which are daily demonstrated before our eyes, we are well assured that the identity of our bodies must certainly be preserved ; because nothing but this can preserve the same person ;—the two ideas must stand or fall together.

These principles and positions being admitted (and I know not how they can be denied), let us consider what will result from the supposition, that the identity of the body consists in the majority of these particles, which were sown in the grave.

If the identity of the body consists in a majority of those particles, which were sown in the grave, it must follow, that in a state of infancy the identity of the body must have consisted in some other thing ; because in a state of infancy, the majority of those particles which are sown in the grave, did not exist in the body. And, as it must likewise follow, that identity must be coeval with the body, and be inseparable from it in all its stages ; it will appear that the identity of the body has been transferred from that other thing in which it consisted in a state of infancy, to this majority of particles in which it is now presumed to consist. It is foreign to our present question, to decide in what this identity consisted, in an infant state ; it is sufficient to know that it could not have consisted in that majority of parti-

cles, in which it is now presumed to be found : a majority which did not then belong to the body, in which this identity was invariably lodged, and from which, on that account, the identity of the infant body must be necessarily excluded. The particles, which now constitute identity, must have been acquired since ; and, in some period subsequent to an infant state, these particles must have incorporated with the body, and on that account, have acquired that identity, which in reality existed in the body previously to that incorporation. Therefore, identity must have been transferred from something in which it was originally placed, to this majority of particles in which it is now presumed to consist. It must have been transferred from that in which it consisted in an infant, when this majority of particles was not ; to this majority of particles which has since been acquired, and since incorporated with the primary system.

It may, perhaps, be said, “ That the identity of the body originally consisted in the majority of particles, and it consists in the majority of particles still ; and so far as identity is presumed to consist in a majority of particles, identity is still the same.” Admitting all that is here contended for, it will not affect the subject under consideration ; it will not prove that identity consists in a majority of those same particles, of which the body either is or was composed. It will prove the identity of the *modification* of identity, rather than identity itself. It will point out that the way and manner of our identity are still the same ; but it will not prove that

identity consists now in the same individual particles that it did then. Nay, it will rather prove the reverse of what it was designed to prove. The identity of the body cannot depend upon the same *arrangement* of materials, indiscriminately chosen, but must depend upon the sameness of the materials themselves. To make, therefore the identity of the body to consist in the peculiarity of modification, is to leave the thing modified quite out of the question ; and it is to make the identity of the body consist in that, to which both its name and nature must be alike unknown. As, therefore, the identity of the body must consist in the sameness of materials, and not in the sameness of the modification of materials, without considering whether sameness will apply to the materials or not ; and, as the sameness of materials, cannot at those two distinct periods become the constituent parts of the same body, in both of which periods identity does exist ; it will follow, either that identity is transferrable ; or, that identity cannot be constituted by any indiscriminate majority of particles, cohering at any given period in the general mass.

That identity cannot be transferred from one system of atoms to another, is a proposition which, if not self-evident, approaches it so nearly, that it will be difficult to find any proof more forcible than the fact itself. An identity, which can be transferred seems to involve a contradiction. Every identity must be the identity of something ; and, under the present consideration, it must be either the identity of the former body, or of the latter ; of that body

which existed in a state of infancy, or of that which was interred in the grave. It cannot be of the former; because the majority of the particles of that body has now given place to that of the present. And if it were, the circumstance of its consisting in the majority of the particles of an infant body, will effectually prevent it from consisting in the majority of the particles of that body which is interred in the grave; because the *majority* of the particles of a mature body, must be much more, both in quantity and in number, than the whole of the body of an infant. And, though we suppose that identity may consist in the majority of the particles of the body which is mature; it will want the great part and principal characteristic of proving *sameness* in this which *is*, and that which *was*. The infant body existed before the majority of the present particles had any inherence in the general mass; and consequently, that body must then have had an identity distinct from the present. For if the identity of the body consist in the majority of particles, the infant body must have had an identity which must have stood or fallen with the permanency of the particles which then were. If the majority of particles be now the same, the former identity must still remain; but, if that majority is changed, the former identity which depended upon, and consisted in them, must be totally done away. And, in either case, a transfer of identity must involve a contradiction, and therefore must be impossible. If the identity of the body be transferred, it must be an identity without

sameness; and if it be not transferred, the identity of an infant's body cannot be constituted by the majority of those particles, which, in a more advanced state, fall into the grave.

The final conclusion from these premises, therefore, must be, that the identity of the body cannot consist either in *the whole of the corporeal mass*, or, in any *given number of particles indiscriminately* taken from that mass; or in the *majority of those particles* which fell into the grave when the body died. It cannot consist in the first; for this supposition would make the body of an enormous size, and would be contradicted also by fact, as in the case of cannibals. Nor can it consist in the second case, which we have supposed; for this would leave room for many identities of the same body, which would be absurd. Neither can it be in the last case, which we have supposed; because this will lead us to suppose an identity without sameness, or a transfer of sameness from one system of atoms to another. And, as each of these conclusions is in itself absurd in the highest degree, and carries with it its own refutation, we are finally led to this point, that the identity of our future bodies cannot consist in either of the cases, which has hitherto been considered, or which we have thus far been able to explore.

But, whatever difficulties may attend this subject of our inquiry, of this we are certain, that the identity of the body does exist; and it seems equally certain, that it must consist in something, which

retains its sameness under all the changes of life, the shocks of death, and must continue the same to eternity.

SECT. II.

Arguments tending to prove, That the sameness of our future Bodies must be constituted by some Germ, or Stamen; and that we now possess all the Evidence of a Resurrection, which we can rationally expect in the present State.

WE have seen in the preceding section, those insuperable difficulties which are connected with the various modes, in which we have hitherto considered the identity of the human body, both in time and in eternity. It now remains to be considered, whether those objections which are brought against the supposition, that identity consists in some *germ* or *stamen*, have in them sufficient validity to counteract the probable evidence, which can be advanced in favour of its reality. And also, whether we have or have not all the evidence in favour of a resurrection, which we might rationally expect in the present state.

It is not improbable, that our notions of some germ being lodged within the compages of our bodies, were first taken from the lips of inspiration, in that grand description which St. Paul has given us of the resurrection of the dead. It is upon this, as one leading idea, that he builds the system which he has there laid down. And notwithstanding the in-

comprehensibleness of its nature, the perfect analogy which subsists between the powers of vegetation and the final restitution of the body from the grave, presents to us an evidence, which, taken in all its parts, will render the subject before us probable in the highest degree.

I have already observed, that were the analogy to be minutely examined, the probability appears much more in favour of the resurrection, than in favour of vegetation; when considered in all its parts, and in connection with all its circumstances. What once had life, we well know must have been capable of it; but what was never endued with life, has not so much as this distant possibility to recommend it. We well know that what once had life must be capable of life in future; but, what never was endued with life, may for aught we know, be so constituted as to be incapable of possessing it.

That the body is now endued with life, we have the most unquestionable evidence; and therefore may thence presume that it may be again restored, because we are thus assured that the materials of which our bodies are composed, are capable of receiving it. But, the vegetative power of grain could not originally have had this evidence to recommend it. Yet, in that subject which seems most improbable, we behold the fact actually accomplished in each succeeding harvest; and even this circumstance gives us every reason to believe, that when the allotted period shall arrive, our bodies shall be reanimated also, though the ways and modes by which each of these is accomplished are

in both cases alike unknown to us, and may remain so through eternity.

By the term *germ* or *stamen*, I understand a certain principle of future being, which was lodged in the human body at its primary formation;—which has “grown with its growth” through all the intermediate stages of life;—which constitutes perpetual sameness; and which shall form the rudiments of our future bodies.—That it shall remain for ever as a radical and immoveable principle; and shall either collect matter around it, which collected matter shall adhere for ever, or contain within it all those particles which are necessary to constitute those bodies which we shall perpetually possess.

On its magnitude and dimensions I will not presume even to risk a thought; and the recess of its residence, while included in the present vehicle, is perhaps of such a nature as will not admit of investigation. It may be diffused throughout the present body, by an innate expansive power which it possesses, and by the shock of death it may be capable of such contraction, as to render it impervious to attack, and invulnerable by all assaults. During its repose in the grave, it will, no doubt, be preserved from incorporating with the identity of other bodies, and from putting forth any operations except such as are peculiar to its state.

We see this principle of sameness perfectly preserved in every species of grain, which is around us; and we can have no kind of conception that a germ of future wheat can, by any possible process, become a constituent part of a grain of rye, or of

barley. This strange commixture would break down the order which God has established in the empire of nature; and finally tend to banish sameness from the world. The identity of grain, must therefore be preserved; and if the identity of grain must be preserved, why should we suppose that the germ of future life, (in which consists the identity of the body, and which is now lodged within its confines,) should be swallowed up in diversity, sooner than that of a simple grain, with which St. Paul has compared it? The same power, which has preserved and which does preserve the one, can without doubt preserve the other also. The order and harmony of all nature require it. In the case of grain, events have fully demonstrated it; and the veracity of God is engaged to ensure to us the certainty of its preservation in man. And the evidence is of equal validity in both cases, so far as the progress of time will identify the correspondent analogy.

✕ There was a period in the origin of things, which elapsed between the creation of grain and the first harvest; when the evidences of that fact, and of the resurrection of the human body were precisely the same. ✕ And, if God were now to create any given form of matter, endued with a vegetative principle, as remote from all resemblance to grain, as it should be from the human body, the cases would be precisely similar, and the evidences on both sides would be nearly equal. But, when the effect of vegetation should come forth to substantiate, by ocular demonstration, the certainty of its

germinating powers; every doubt would then be removed from our mind. And, in process of time, we should view the successive changes without any wonder; as much so, as we now view the continual changes of seed time and harvest, and the alternate vicissitudes of corruption and germination.

This case is precisely our own; it is true, we differ from grain, in that we move by a much slower process. ✕ But, the germ of future life is already lodged within our bodies; it will soon be sown in the earth, and in the day of eternity, it shall be awakened into immortal life. ✕ The grain, which is fleeting and transitory, moves with speedy transition through all its evolutions; we therefore behold all its parts in one collected view. But the human body, being destined for perpetual duration, and having an eternity before it, moves by slow but no less certain steps through those necessary changes, which, when once passed, can never more return.

Under these views, how can the whole scene be less than wonderful, when we survey it in all its parts? In our present state, we see but in part,— ✕ the sequel is reserved for another state of existence. ✕ And, in our present condition, while we see nothing more than the body sown, and while we are fully assured that the whole face of nature must be changed, before it can rise from the grave; why do we look for greater evidence than even our own reason has taught us to expect? Or, why do we look for greater evidence than the nature of the subject can possibly afford? The vast changes, which all nature must undergo before this event can be accomplished, have not yet taken place; and until

those changes shall be accomplished, we can no more expect the resurrection of the body, than we can suppose that an effect can precede its cause.

In the order of nature, the seed time must first exist. And, after the grain is sown, it must vegetate and produce its fruits, before we can see the final result of all. Now if we stop at any stage in this progress, and in that stage attempt to decide upon the certainty, or uncertainty of the future event, without waiting the arrival of that period in which alone the final result can be expected to appear; we have in such cases nothing more to expect, than disappointment and error, as the just reward of our indiscretion and presumption.

Just such is the case before us. The seed is already in existence; in many cases we have seen it sown. But the final harvest, nothing but the season of harvest can produce. And, as this season of harvest is lodged beyond the boundaries of our present state, we can expect no more evidence on this side of the grave; and what further evidence the subject may be capable of affording, we must assuredly die to know. †

As to the certainty of the result, we have for our ground-work the whole analogy of nature, and the infallible declaration of God; and they who doubt, under these circumstances, will not be satisfied with any thing short of ocular demonstration. But, I appeal to any man,—can ocular demonstration possibly take place in the present state? Can you prove to any man or men, by ocular demonstration, the resurrection of the human body, without calling eter-

nity to your aid? The face of the question involves eternity; it necessarily refers to another world; and to have ocular demonstration of an event, which necessarily refers to eternity, without eternity, includes a contradiction. And, if ocular demonstration cannot be obtained, we must be content with such evidence as God has placed within our reach. We have all the proof that the progressive state of the subject can afford; and to expect more is unreasonable and unjust.

But, when the times of restitution shall arrive; and the great period which is appointed by the allotment of heaven, for the renovation of human nature, shall be accomplished; we shall then, without doubt, have all that reason to expect the event to correspond with the elapsing period, which we have now to remain without it; and to be satisfied with such evidence as we have. But, until that period arrives, we have no more reason to charge the doctrine of the resurrection with an insufficiency of evidence, than we have to attribute to a grain of wheat a want of fruitfulness, before the great process of nature has passed upon it.

Objections may here be urged against the analogy between vegetation and the resurrection, from the disproportion of time in which the bodies of men repose in the grave. For answers to these objections, I refer the reader to chapter five, and section three of this work.

Admitting this germ, or principle of identity, for which I contend, to have existed in a seminal state

from the first to the last of the human race; then every movement of time, which has elapsed from Adam down to the present hour, must have had its influence in an equal manner, upon all the individuals of the human race, who have ever lived, or shall live to the latest periods of time. All, therefore, in the natural process will be alike prepared; and will be equally ready when the trumpet shall sound, to start forth at once into life and immortality.

The short interval of life, I consider of no moment, when compared to that stupendous range of time which reaches from creation, down to the day of judgment. It can be no more than a single point, which loses itself in the vast abyss with which it is connected. The importance of time can only be estimated from its connection with moral action. As it stands in relation to the grand process of that germinating principle, which shall be the stamen of our future bodies in eternity; it can be but as the minutest drop to the unbounded ocean, or as an insensible atom on the shore. It may, nevertheless, be a necessary and a constituent part of the great process itself, through which we must pass; and even the inequalities of the duration of human life may be as necessary as life itself, to form and complete the minute parts of the amazing whole.

SECT. III.

The Objections against the Idea of a Germ, as constituting the Identity of the Body hereafter, no Argument against its Certainty. Several Objections considered. Several Changes of our Bodies highly probable.

WE have already seen, in some of the preceding sections, the difficulties which obstruct our progress in the various suppositions which we have formed. We are fully satisfied that a principle of identity must exist; but that which constitutes it, is not so easy to explore. We have already considered those suppositions, which place the identity of the body in all the particles which were deposited in the grave; and we have been led to obstacles which are not only insurmountable, but big with absurdities of the grossest nature. The same or similar obstructions have presented themselves before us in that supposition, which places the identity of the body in the greatest number of particles indiscriminately taken, either at the moment of the interment of the body, or at any previous period of life. The certainty of the principal obliges us to explore another region; and we are driven to some immoveable stamen as our last resort.

Whatever it may be, which constitutes the identity of the body, it must be a something which retains an immoveable permanency in the midst of

fluctuation; and continues the same through all those changes which the body is destined to undergo. Nothing, therefore, can be so congenial to the case before us as the supposition which we now make; *that some radical particles must be fixed within us, which constitute our sameness through all the mutations of life; and which, remaining in a state of incorruptibility, shall put forth a germinating power beyond the grave, and be the germ of our future bodies.* †

Of the term itself, a definition has been already given; and I now proceed to examine the principal objections by which it is opposed. It has been said, that, "if in the present life, we suppose the identity of the body to be lodged in any given number of immoveable particles; a part must then constitute the whole, which is an evident absurdity."

That a theory which makes a *part to constitute a whole* must necessarily be erroneous, I am willing to allow; because the supposition includes a contradiction. But, that such absurdities will follow, from the supposition and premises before us; is to me neither clear nor satisfactory. On the contrary, the objection which has been started will not apply to the case in hand; but to subjects with which our inquiry has little or no connection.

The subject before us is not an inquiry into the *constituent parts* of the human body; but into its *identity*. It is not its *numerical particles*, but the sameness of personality. These are distinct ideas, and can only have in this view, a distant connection with one another. The numerical particles, of

which our bodies are composed, are in a state of perpetual flux; but since sameness of person remains under every change which these numerical particles undergo, it plainly follows, that *that* in which sameness consists, must remain immoveable also; and hence it follows, that those particles which constitute the whole body, and the identity of that body, must necessarily be distinct from one another. For, certain it is, that if the sameness of the body consisted in all the numerical particles of which that body was composed, sameness must be capable of a transfer; and, consequently, must be destroyed by the supposition which we are obliged thus to admit, that the *identity* of the body must not only be compatible with those changes which the body perpetually undergoes; but must be lodged in some secret recess which these changes cannot reach.

Having thus two distinct ideas, one of the identity of the body, and the other of the component or numerical parts of which the body is formed, we can plainly perceive that the latter may change, while the former remains perfect and entire;* and the reason is, because the former is not dependent upon the latter for its existence. It therefore follows, that the admission of an inherent principle, which shall become a germ of future life, having only a remote connection with these floating particles which occasionally form the body, cannot include within it that contradiction which the objection has supposed. For, if to admit a germ or principle of identity, will oblige us to admit that a

part must contain or comprehend a whole, then no such distinct ideas can possibly be formed as those which have been pointed out. The objection itself is founded upon a supposition, that the identity of the body must consist in the numerical particles, of which the whole mass is evidently composed. One of these two points must, therefore, be given up;—either that which makes a part to comprehend a whole, which is the amount of the objection, or that which supposes the identity of the body to remain, amidst the changes which its numerical parts undergo, because they are incompatible* with each other. But, as the latter of these points is founded upon fact, and the former which is included in the objection upon theory;—as the latter is founded upon ocular demonstration, and the former is only speculatively probable;—as the latter can appeal to visible proof in the growth and changes which are conspicuous in the human body, and the former can only appeal to abstract hypothesis; it is certain, I think, beyond all reasonable doubt, that the nu-

* Their incompatibility arises from this consideration : The contradiction, which the objection supposes, can only be admitted to exist, while we suppose the identity of the body to be lodged in all its numerical parts. The very instant that we suppose a distinction between the numerical particles at large, and that principal, or germ, in which identity consists; that very instant we destroy the contradiction which has been supposed, and reconcile our own views with those suppositions which have been made. And, therefore, because the identity of the body is not presumed to extend to the whole mass; it cannot be charged with a contradiction, which on account of distinction is rendered inconsistent with its nature.

merical parts of the body may change, while its *identity* remains entire. And, as this fact is incompatible with the supposition, that a part must comprehend a whole, but is perfectly compatible with the idea of a germ, as constituting the identity of the body, the evidence is at once decisive and unquestionable. The conclusion, therefore, is, that our idea of a germ does not include the contradiction, which the objection has supposed,—that a “*part must contain or comprehend a whole* ;” and we may safely admit, that the identity of the body may consist in some germ, as we have supposed, without involving ourselves either in absurdities or contradictions.

Whatever is probable, and involves neither absurdity nor contradiction, may be with safety admitted in speculative reasonings ; but the idea of a germ is probable, and includes neither absurdity nor contradiction ; and therefore the idea of a germ may with safety be admitted, as that in which the identity of the body does consist.

It has frequently been said, that “ all *germs* must contain within themselves the individual parts of that future production which shall be hereafter ;” and even this has been advanced as an argument against the admission of that germ, for which I am contending. But, this objection, together with the arguments by which it has been supported, is rather fictitious than real. It is founded upon a supposition, which is taken for granted as being a fact, but which in reality is destitute of proof.

That all germs must contain within them a *virtual energy*, to produce that being or thing, or which they are the germs, must without all doubt be admitted; but this is a notion, distinct from that which supposes that all the individual parts are actually there. The radical energy to produce, may exist, without including any thing of formal being. Where all the parts are in actual existence, nothing more can be necessary, than simple developement, to unfold the latent members which were primarily inherent. But, this will not be consistent with the idea which we have of a germ.

If all the parts of that body, which shall be hereafter, are now included in its present germ of future existence, as parts, and nothing but simple developement be necessary to render formal existence visible; no new accession of extraneous particles can be deemed necessary; because the admitting of the necessity of new particles to fill up any given vacuities, implies previous imperfection in that formal existence, which was admitted. We have as much reason to admit formal perfection, as we have formal existence; and the same arguments, which will militate against the one, must necessarily militate against the other. That formal perfection does not exist, is demonstrated by fact; and from this source we are fully assured that those arguments, which would announce it, must of necessity be wrong. And, without all doubt, could we view formal *existence*, with the same precision as we view formal *perfection*, we should see equal reason

to discard both. Even the term germ itself implies prematurity and imperfection; and we have as much reason to suppose that this imperfection and prematurity applies to the *formality*, as well as to the *completion* of existence.

When we turn our thoughts to the germ of future being, as it applies to the bodies which shall be hereafter; there are two views in which it may be contemplated. The *first* of these, is to view the germ as being a fixed principle, to which extraneous atoms shall adhere to complete the frame; and the *second* is to view this germ as including all those particles, which are necessary to constitute that body which shall survive the grave. On both of these we will make some remarks. In the first of these views, a germ can only be considered as a radical or seminal principal, which becomes the foundation of the future body; and is that, from whence future life shall emanate. That it is that fixed principle which shall survive the grave; around which future atoms shall rally, and to which they shall adhere, to form that body which we shall possess for ever.

If the germ of being, which constitutes the characteristic of animals and plants, and which in reality seminally contains their essential *powers*, were to contain within itself in the present life, the formal parts of those bodies, which are to succeed in future generations; then nothing more than simple developement would be necessary to complete the future mass; nor would the adherence of any additional atom, be necessary to give a completion

which must be supposed to be inherent. But, to admit this supposition, would be to make an end of all distinctions between degrees of ponderosity and degrees of magnitude; it would be to annihilate those degrees which exist in each, in proportion to the specific quantity of matter that they contain. This would, in fact, involve an absurdity; because it would make a part to contain a whole. But to admit only a mode of material existence, which includes within it a virtual, or potential energy to produce a future body, and from which, all degrees of magnitude and ponderosity are perfectly excluded in the consideration; the supposition will exclude the absurdities of the last sentence, while the germ itself will retain the capability of becoming the foundation and permanent principle of that future body, which is presumed to result from it.

That all causes include their effects, will, perhaps, be denied by none; but we cannot conceive, from admitting this axiom, that effects reside in their causes in a formal manner; or that the effect can exist in its cause in the character of an effect. All that we can possibly conceive by such language, is, that a virtual energy resides in the cause, adequate to produce that effect which we attribute to it, when brought into actual operation.

Were we to suppose, that the fruit which any given tree should produce, actually existed in the tree itself in a formal manner; the effect would, in many cases, be much greater than its cause, which we are well assured is totally impossible. And, in like manner, could we suppose, that all the indivi-

dual parts of all the posterity of Adam, were actually and formally resident within the loins of our great progenitor ; it would raise him into a state of being monstrous and absurd. It seems, therefore, more congenial with our understandings and judgments, to suppose that Adam possessed the power of begetting his posterity, than to conceive that all his posterity, to the latest periods of time, were actually included or resident within him. It is in this view, that an effect may with the utmost propriety, be said to reside within its cause. The cause must possess a virtual energy, which it is capable of exerting ; in order to produce those effects, which time only can ripen into maturity, and which must look back to this cause as the origin of their existence.

But, even admitting, in the progress of reasoning, that all effects actually reside within their causes ; and that the germ of being, for which I contend, as applying exclusively to the human body, contains within it all the minute and insensible parts of that body which shall be ; I say, admitting that these *effects* have this formal existence, yet I have no conception that this supposition would involve the resurrection in any difficulty. For, in the case before us it could not be said to contain within it, the numerical particles of the body which *now is*, but of that body which *shall be* ; and, therefore, those difficulties which may be inseparable from this mode of accounting for seminal existence in the *present life*, can have no kind of application beyond the grave. I now proceed to the second view.

The bodies, which shall be raised hereafter from

the sleep of death, we are fully satisfied, will be of a refined and spiritual nature; so far as matter in its most exalted state can be abstracted from its grossness, without losing any essential property of its nature. Under these circumstances, the real number of particles which is necessary to form that immortal and spiritual body which shall be, may be considerably less than that which is necessary to form those bodies which we have in the present life. With the powers of expansion we are but little acquainted; it is a term, when applied to the particles of matter, to which we can hardly annex any precise idea; and we are therefore unable to calculate upon its extent. How far those particles which shall compose our bodies hereafter, may be capable of dilation, and of admitting vacuities in their minute recesses, in order to give extension to the extremities of the body which they shall compose, it is impossible for us to say. But, even simple extension may supply the place of matter; and tend to spiritualize the body which shall survive the grave. On these grounds, an inconsiderable number of particles may be sufficient to form the body; and that portion which now constitutes its identity, may perhaps contain within it all those atoms which may be necessary to the formation of a spiritual body beyond the grave.

— The power of expansion, when applied to matter, will open to our view a field of wonders which we cannot fathom; and, like that space which suggests to us the idea of its existence, it seems an ocean

without bottom and without shore. It is a pathless region, in which we may wander in endless excursions, till we completely lose ourselves in our own contemplations.

As the future bodies, which we expect to possess beyond the grave, will be *light*, *active*, and *volatile*; and as the matter of which they will be composed, will be so far refined, that it will become comparatively spiritual in its nature; we are led immediately to conclude, that the specific quantity of matter which will be necessary then, can bear but a small proportion to the quantity which is now requisite. The changes which our present bodies must undergo corroborate this truth; and induce us to believe that we have more particles now, than we shall have then.

The particles expanded into a tenuity, with which we are but imperfectly acquainted, may sustain their relative positions in the future system; and complete that organization which will be necessary for the state which these bodies shall inherit. And, while the density of the parts which are so necessary in the present economy of life, shall be removed; the particles themselves which constituted it, must be removed also, because not wanted. This removal must therefore lighten the mass of its cumbersome load; and contribute towards that *activity*, *tenuity*, and *energy*, which shall remain for ever. Our uniform expectations tend to confirm these observations; because they find a mirror in every feeling heart.

The precise quantity of matter which may be necessary to complete that organization which our bodies will then possess, may be but exceedingly small. For, as the present organs themselves will undergo surprising changes, and those parts which required the greatest compactness and density of materials, will, in all probability be done away; a small portion of matter may be sufficient to fix those organs in a state of perpetual vigour, which have ripened in the grave, and which shall flourish in eternity. And, therefore, the germ which is now lodged within us in some secret and unapproachable recess of our bodies, may contain within itself all those numerical particles, which may be necessary to form that future spiritualized body, which shall succeed to this which we now possess.

The modification, indeed, of those particles which shall remain, must be totally changed; and perhaps they may be differently combined; so that what now forms but an invisible portion may be diffused on every side. And, by the peculiar configuration of the parts, and exquisite disposition of the constituent materials; this portion may be capable, through the power of expansion, of engrossing the same superficies of space as our present bodies now engross.

It may, perhaps, be said, "that the above observations will make a part to contain a whole." I admit the fact, but deny the absurdity which perhaps may be inferred. The utmost that can be said is this, that these observations make a part of that body

which *now is*, to contain the whole of that body which *shall be hereafter*, which may be done without absurdity or contradiction.

Of the various changes which our bodies shall undergo, we can form but inadequate conceptions ; and these conceptions must be much confused. Even the stations which our future bodies are destined to occupy, demand an important change in their constitution ; and afford much corroborating evidence to support the sentiment now before us.

When all the intestines shall be destroyed, and blood shall be no longer necessary to repair the system—when the mediums of nutrition shall be done away—when the organs of respiration, and of generation shall be for ever removed,—and all distinctions of sex shall be abolished—we see convincing reasons why a large proportion of our present materials may be spared. The removal of these organs, and consequently of the materials of which they are formed, must make a considerable deduction from the general stock, as well as form a new epoch in human existence. On these considerations, the reduction in real quantity may be so great, as to leave no occasion for more particles than what the germ itself may be able to supply, without the admission of any new atom into any part of the spiritualized system.

In the mean while, the exterior of the human figure may be preserved entire, in all its parts ; and even the particular turn of those features, and coun-

tenances,* by which we shall be able to recognize our departed friends, will be secured from the injuries of death, and the dissolution of the grave. They will, in all probability, be considerably improved by the changes which the body shall have undergone ; at once heightened by the flush of youth which shall never fade ; with vigour which shall never decay ; and with life which shall never end.

The particular manner, in which this radical principle, which now constitutes the identity of the human body exists, is too obscure for our development ; too mysterious for our researches. It may

* Against the supposition, that the same exterior figure, and particular turn of features and countenances will be preserved, notwithstanding the changes which the body will undergo, it may perhaps be objected, "That bodily defects and deformities will be perpetuated also." To this I answer, that what is thus presumed, is by no means a necessary consequence of the theory for which I contend. It is more than probable, that those deformities which we now behold, are lodged in those extraneous parts which are but mere appendages to the principle of bodily identity. We are confirmed in this opinion, by circumstances of daily observation. When we compare the shrivelled muscles of *fourscore*, with the blush of beauty which the age of *nineteen* exhibits ; we cannot but perceive comparative deformity. And yet we are fully assured that *sameness of person* has continued under all the stages of variation. The same observations may be made on the complexion of those countenances, which shall be preserved. In this also, we behold in the present life some diminutive changes. The process of corruption may therefore renovate the complexion as well as the body, and bring the whole of the human race to a standard of external beauty, of which we are incompetent to form adequate conceptions.

be so far distended as to pervade the whole mass of matter of which our bodies are composed ; or at least, may form those attenuated outlines, which give permanency to our features ; and to which extraneous matter adheres in the present life. To this portion the organs may be annexed ; or perhaps within its confines they may be lodged ; and those particles which are vitally united to it, in any stage of our present being, in all probability become parts of our bodies, from partaking of that common life which appears to be connected with it. In this view, it becomes a medium of action, through which the exterior organs communicate intelligence to the immaterial spirit, with which it is connected, and to which it is allied. And, when the immaterial spirit which is most probably united to this principle of identity, shall be removed ; then this principle of identity shall be withdrawn from its distention, or at least shall cease to operate ; and retiring into itself, the whole body shall sink into a lifeless mass.

From the latent properties of this principle, it is highly probable that it may diffuse its attenuated fibres, through those parts which may be considered as the principal seats of life ; while even that flexibility of texture which is inseparable from its nature, may add to the permanency of its being, and unite its materials with an adhesion which shall continue for ever.

Capable of retiring within itself, when any of the organical parts are wounded, through which it had been diffused, it will lose no part by such exterior

mutilations. Like the sensitive plant, it will shrink from the touch of violence, and hang upon its own centre like the world which we inhabit. The lobes of matter, through which it had been diffused, but from which it is now driven by force; no longer able to perform the functions which were peculiar to their station, while united to the principle of identity, may remain while the uses of them are totally withdrawn, and nothing continues but the configuration of parts.

This germ, in which the identity of the body is lodged, having retired from the forsaken part, removes with the removal of itself, all that energy which can distinguish the organs from the mere modification of matter; and will be prepared to diffuse this energy which now resides within itself, through any new particles which may be vitally united to it. And, as all matter is in its own nature incorruptible, and therefore placed beyond the influence of dissolution and decay; when this germ, either with or without new particles of matter which shall collect around it, uniting with its immaterial partner, shalt retire into a more permanent region, where it shall be for ever removed from those external causes which in our present state are capable of destroying the adhesion and cement of matter in almost every form; it shall commence a mode of being which shall continue through eternity. For, what being soever shall inhabit a state into which nothing shall enter, and in which nothing can exist that is capable of conducting it towards a state of dissolution, that being, whatsoever may be the mo-

dification of its nature, must necessarily be immortal, and consequently must continue for ever.

It is to this germ of future being that the immaterial spirit is, most probably, united in the present life, though by ways and modes which we cannot comprehend ; and it is to this that it shall be again reunited, and with which it shall continue for ever. While in a state of union with the spirit, in this life, its immortal partner caused it to be diffused through the vital parts of the corporeal mass. *x* But, after this spirit was withdrawn, it shrivelled and retired within itself. During this state of separation, it continued in a torpid state ; but when a reunion shall again take place, it will again put forth its expansive powers. And, as the union shall be perpetual, it shall continue in a diffused state, never more to sink into a state of torpor and inactivity. *x*

In our estimation of material objects, and calculation upon them, we decide upon the quantity of different bodies of equal magnitudes by the specific gravity of each. But, in that state where gravity shall probably be done away, and be removed from matter, our estimate of its quantity must be without a guide ; because the standard by which we measured quantity will be unknown ; and unless some new standard shall be attained by us, the specific quantity of which our bodies shall be composed must continue unknown for ever.

Under these circumstances, when all gravity shall be removed from that matter of which our bodies shall be composed : it will be impossible to ascertain what degrees of solidity they shall contain ; and

the solidity being unknown, the extent of their volatility must be unknown also. That part, therefore, which now forms but a minute portion, but contains the identity of our bodies, may have, compacted within it, a sufficiency of solidity to form all the parts of our agile and volatile bodies, which we shall inherit in a future world. The loss of gravity may contribute to establish its activity; and the impulse of the will may supersede the necessity of muscular exertion. And the body under these circumstances, may be capable of a transition from place to place with a velocity somewhat analogous to that of light.

The final result of these reasonings therefore is, that though it is highly probable that a multitude of particles will unite hereafter with that principle, which constitutes the identity of our bodies here; yet there can be no absolute necessity that any new particles must be united, or that all, or even the majority of those which had been vitally united to the body in any given period of its existence, should again come forth, in the resurrection, to form these bodies which we hope to possess hereafter. If these reasonings and conclusions be admitted, all those objections which are drawn from the changes of our bodies, are at once obviated; and those questions which are proposed about the *sameness* of numerical particles are fully answered, without involving any difficulties of a serious nature.

The particles, which had occasionally adhered to the body, (in admitting this theory) may incorporate with various bodies, without interfering with the identity of either; or interrupting the final comple-

tion of our future etherial frames. In this view, we plainly discover how corruption may put on incorruption ; how this mortal may put on immortality ; and how that which was sown a natural, shall be raised a spiritual body ; and also how this spiritual body shall endure throughout eternity, without involving those difficulties, which on any other principles seem connected with the resurrection of the dead.

The local notions, which we have of justice and injustice, as they apply to the claims of each and every particle, as having a portion in the resurrection, cannot be involved in the theory before us. All matter is *in itself* unconscious and inert ; and must for that reason be alike incapable of pleasure or of pain. Exaltation and degradation must be wholly inapplicable : and remunerative justice must be totally discharged from the situation, which the particles may finally occupy.

That vitality, to which alone moral action could have any possible relation, and which alone can involve the moral and remunerative justice of God ; must be exclusively confined to this principle of identity, and to that immaterial spirit to which it is at once united and allied. And, as both shall retain their respective energies throughout eternity, the divine justice will appear conspicuous in rewarding and punishing those individuals, in their spirits and in the essential properties of their bodies, both of which in unalienable sameness shall continue for ever. And, although multitudes of those atoms, which in the present life were connected with the

permanent principles of the body, shall be separated, and separated for ever ; and, although no additional particles should succeed to supply their places ; yet as the principle of identity is still the same that it ever had been, nothing can be said to be removed from it, which was capable of moral action ; or which is now capable either of reward or punishment, because incapable of joy or pain ; and which, consequently, cannot involve the justice of God.

The particles, which have been separated from their former connection, during any part of the process of nature, either in life, or during the repose of the grave can feel no interest whatsoever in the changes which they have undergone ; or in the future purposes to which they may be applied. To “ float in the breeze or shiver in the grass,” to roll in the ocean, or to become stationary in the rock, must be of equal indifference ; because, removed from their union with that principle of vitality with which they were once connected, they must be incapable of all sensation. They can only possess those essential properties which are inseparable from the substance of matter, to which rewards and punishments cannot apply. The Divine justice is not therefore involved in the question before us ; nor is it bound to collect together the numerical particles, which, at any given period of existence, were united with the principle of identity, which shall be preserved for ever, from all mutation and decay,

SECT. IV.

Probable Arguments, That the Changes through which our Bodies have already passed, are a Groundwork of future Expectations; and ensure, upon Principles of Analogy, the Resurrection of the Human Body.

THIS portion of matter which constitutes the identity of the body, being forsaken by its immaterial partner at the hour of death, and separated from those gross materials which were found adhering to it in the present life; must commence at the period of its resurrection, a form of life which we cannot adequately comprehend. We are, therefore, about to enter a region, in which comparative analogy must be our only guide.

That there are in the human soul new faculties, which have not yet unfolded themselves, we have much reason to believe; when we turn our thoughts to what is past. And, from finding those faculties which we have in the present state of our existence, exactly suited to the station which God has called us to sustain; we are led to conclude that those faculties which shall be unfolded hereafter, will possess an appropriate relation to those objects with which we shall be conversant; and be peculiarly adapted to those regions which we shall then inhabit. Why then may we not infer from just analogy, that the same or similar changes will take place in its material partner, though the ways and modes in which these changes shall be accomplished in both,

are alike unknown? In our present state, we discover in the soul those faculties which are suitable to its present condition; and from what is unfolded we calculate upon what lies concealed. And, from those bodily powers which we possess, we presume upon those which are reserved to put forth their vigour, when the process of the grave shall be passed away, and time shall conduct us to the regions of eternity.

These analogical conclusions are warranted to us by our contemplations of what has already taken place in man, both in his material and intellectual powers. The astonishing changes which all human beings undergo, from their first formation in the womb, till they reach the zenith of their material and intellectual powers, are facts which bid defiance to comparative calculations; they outsoar all our conjectures, and even arrest impossibility in its infinite distance from us.

In the womb, we discover nothing higher than an organic or vegetative life. But the change of station produces a change in condition, which is at once astonishing and incomprehensible. Organic, or vegetative life immediately subsides, and gives place to that which is animal, the instant that an infant enters the world; and respiration, which was perfectly unknown before, becomes now essentially necessary to future animal life. These are facts, which are self-evident. If then, the change of our station from the womb to the present life, be productive of changes in our manner of existence;—if we, from organic or *vegetative life*, proceed to

that which is *animal*, and from *animal* to that which is *rational*; why may we not justly infer, when a similar or a greater change shall pass upon us at death, which will totally alter our manner of existence, that a similar or greater change will take place in those bodily powers, as well as mental faculties which we possess?

In our embryo state, our faculties and powers were exactly suited to our vegetative situation; all was dormant, sluggish, inactive, and almost unknown. In our present station, those faculties which had ripened through our infant process, put forth their powers; and are evidently accommodated to the station which we now occupy, and which they were destined to fill. And such, in all probability, may be the nature of their constitution, that nothing but the process of the womb, the vegetative manner of life, and the animal condition through which we have passed, could call forth these powers into their present state of *partially mature existence*.

✧ Every thing, which is produced by God, is the result of the most consummate wisdom; the order of nature cannot be inverted, nor can human ingenuity amend the plan which we behold. The book of nature affords us an exposition of these truths; but in no branch does infinite wisdom appear with more conspicuous lustre, than in the formation of man; and in those progressive steps, through which he is obliged to pass, from organic or vegetative existence to the maturity of the present life. ✕

If our reasoning powers had been bestowed upon us, while we were confined within the womb, they would evidently have been in that state, bestowed in vain. And if that vegetative life, which we then possessed, had been withholden, life itself would have been impossible, according to all our modes of reasoning. In like manner, if vegetative life had been communicated to man in his mature state, even animation would be an affliction; and if, in this mature state, our reasoning powers had been denied, life itself would be little better than an intolerable burden. ✕ Thus then, the powers which God has bestowed, both mental and bodily, are exactly fitted to those stations which he has called us to occupy; and we are obliged, by the force of unquestionable evidence, to acquiesce in this conclusion,—that God in all his works has manifested perfection, and that he has not made any thing in vain. ✕

The remarks, which have been made in the preceding paragraph, are founded upon a supposition, that such an inversion was possible as that which has been stated; and in the conclusions, which have been drawn, we see the fatal consequences which would ensue if that possibility were reduced to fact. But, that such events are even possible in all their parts, I am far from admitting. The progress of those gradations, through which we have passed, was without all doubt necessary, to call our faculties and powers from their immature to their present state; and on that account, it formed a necessary step to-

wards this perfection which the human powers have attained. If, therefore, the changes which I have presumed, had taken place, they must have involved absurdities which are inseparable from the possibility which has been presumed. We must, in this case, have presumed that *maturity* could have taken place in a state of *immaturity*; and that *immaturity* must have existed in a state of *maturity*; the absurdity and contradictoriness of which it is useless to pursue. It must, therefore, be admitted, as an evident conclusion, that the condition in which God has placed us, is necessary for the use of our present powers; and that the present powers which we possess, are alike necessary to our present condition.

In this view, whether we look to the present state, or to that which has preceded it, both are confined by boundaries which they cannot pass; while they are connected together by ties which are indissoluble. The variation in our condition seems to establish the boundaries, as well as the necessity of them, which divide the states which we contemplate. The continuance of this life fixes the boundaries between our embryo and our future state; it is, therefore, in this region alone that our bodily powers can exert themselves. In like manner, our state of being in the womb fixed those boundaries which divided vegetative from animal life. ✕ In each of these states, we perceive powers and faculties, which are commensurate with our wants; in which we perceive that nothing is either given or with-

holden, which was necessary to our being ; so that neither deficiency nor redundancy, can be predicated of the works of God.

Thus far we have seen in what is past, analogy founded upon fact. Our observations have, however, been confined to the embryo and the present state of man. In these we have seen those faculties and powers unfold themselves, which were peculiar to the stations which we have contemplated ; and in which, progression became necessary to ripen to maturity the various powers which we have beheld. We have seen the changes in *station*, which we have already undergone, from an embryo to a mature state ; and we have seen those changes in our *condition*, which have been associated with the states of being through which we have passed. A recurrence, therefore, to what has passed, will become a groundwork of our analogical reasoning, and give us confidence in those inquiries where probability cannot be supported by fact.

A change in our *situation* of being, can hardly be conceived, without our connecting with it, a proportionable change in the *condition* of that being which is presumed. If, therefore, the changes which we have already discovered in our condition of being, resulting from our alteration in mode of existence, have been so great, what have we not to contemplate, when such changes shall take place upon us, as we have reason to expect, when mortality shall be swallowed up in immortal life ?

The changes, through which we have passed,

have called into action all our reasoning powers which we possess; powers, which nothing but the various process through which we have moved could ripen; and which, were it not for these changes, must have lain dormant and inactive for ever. In like manner, the analogy is equally good, when we apply it to our future being. When that change, which death shall make upon us, shall take place; we are taught to expect from what is past, that new powers and faculties will ripen into birth, and put forth that vigour which shall flourish through eternity.

To behold human nature in its embryo state, and to form calculations from the evidences which then appear, upon the future station and condition which the embryo shall sustain and exhibit, must exceed the boldest conjecture of man. In the original state of things, the thought would have been daring, that should have presumed to conceive any state more excellent than that which was perceived; and yet we have on these cases ocular demonstration, that the boldest conjecture is outdone by fact. But in the subject of the resurrection which we contemplate, we have before us those previous changes which we have undergone; and these become a permanent groundwork of our future calculations. We may, therefore, rationally presume, that we view but a minute part of those faculties which shall be unfolded hereafter; and that we can form only inadequate calculations on that mode of being,

which God has reserved for our bodies and souls, when they shall be re-united beyond the grave.

We have already seen, that our separation from the womb has called reason into action, and given to our bodies animal life. Why then, may not that change, which death shall occasion, awaken new faculties and powers, as superior to those which we now possess, as those which we possess are to those which are possessed by an embryo in the womb?

From organic or vegetative life, we have seen animal life commence, through a change which has already taken place. And, why may we not infer that when a similar or superior change shall take place by death, that the animal life shall be succeeded by that which is spiritual; though we were to know no more at present of the way and manner of that spiritual life, than an embryo in the womb can know of this mode of life which we now enjoy?

From virtual existence, and potential energy, we have seen formal being to result, through the process of an astonishing change. Why then may not another change, which shall be equally astonishing, transform formal being into perpetual existence?

From matter, apparently lifeless and inert, we have seen energies and powers of loco-motion arise. And why, from existent energies and loco-motion, may not the powers of contraction and expansion step forth into existence?—Why, from the energies and loco motion which our bodies now possess, may not the power of transformation take place?—Why may not the body, which shall be spiritual, be

capable of transporting itself with inconceivable velocity, through that endless variety of regions, which shall be for ever teeming with beauties, which shall be for ever new?

We have seen two distant natures so united, that their interests are become mutual, and in many cases their dependencies reciprocal, effected by ties which are invisible; it cannot, therefore, be unreasonable to infer that the body, though material, may be capable of a re-union with its long lost partner, through ties which even eternity shall not be able to dissolve.

We have seen in the present life this union subsist occasionally through one hundred years; though the body has been encircled with disasters, and exposed to the action of the elements, and though gravitation has been continually acting upon its dissoluble parts. Why then may we not conclude, when both soul and body shall be removed from the occasions of their separation, that the same ties may unite them together, through a period of duration in which the mind is lost in the immensity of members, when the measurements of time shall be no more?

Through a change, which has taken place, we have seen inertness put on activity and vigour, though the substance is purely material. Why then may we not reasonably conclude, that the same substance through another change, may put on immortality and eternal life?

We have seen five distinct senses spring forth, in a substance which was originally destitute of any, through a change which has passed upon its mode of existence; and from this circumstance we have every reason to suppose that a similar change will produce other senses, as new in their natures, and as distinct from one another. And, if five new senses could be communicated to a portion of matter, which was originally destitute of them; why may we not expect more senses from those bodies which now possess them, when another change shall take place? And why may we not expect, that those senses which we hope to possess, shall be infinitely superior in point of nature, and far exceeding in point of energy and acuteness, the most exalted which we have yet beheld? We have reason to expect that these effects will be produced, by changes which will be more surprising than any which we have undergone.

We have seen organs of the most astonishing constructions, arise from a chaotic mass of unorganized materials, and become the inlets of such knowledge, as nothing but the certainty of fact could induce us to believe. And, if unorganized matter has been capable of becoming organized and these organs of becoming the inlets of knowledge, the most astonishing and vast;—of producing senses so distinct, and yet so uniform;—so simple, and yet so comprehensive;—capable of scrutinizing an atom, or of grasping a world;—of con-

templating the beauties of both, or of analyzing the constituent parts of either ;—if, I say, such senses as we thus possess, have been produced in our bodies, and have come forward to this state of perfection which we discover, and that through the medium of those changes, which we have seen the body already undergo? Why may not new organs arise from another change, new modifications take place in the arrangements of the parts, and new senses develope themselves, as well as new modes of communicating and acquiring knowledge, beam forth in all their lustre, and discover to us such fountains of intelligence, as may at once astonish us, and absorb our powers of intellect in scenes, of which we can at present, have no kind of conception? And, as our birth is but one link in the chain of our existence, and comparative perfection has resulted from it, we may justly infer, that genuine perfection cannot be attained, until all those changes which are necessary thereto shall be undergone. † And, therefore, death, with all its gloomy horrors, must form a necessary part in the important process ; and conduce to the ripening of our faculties, and to the preparation of our bodies, at least those essential parts of them in which their identity consists, for their future habitations in the regions of immortality. †

Through the changes which our bodies have passed, we have seen articulation to arise from the

motion of matter; and by this means our organs have been made subservient to the communication of our thoughts. The same medium, when refined by death, and the subsequent process of the grave, may be rendered, through the tenuity of their nature, more exquisitely applicable to the same office, capable of communicating more sublime intelligence.

The body, hereafter, may be a necessary vehicle of the spirit, through the organs of which it may display its communications. By the loss of its gross materials, it may be softened with flexibility, and rendered suitable to the station which it shall hereafter occupy, without retarding the movements of the soul, or obstructing its various operations. It may fill the double station of medium and shield, it may serve the office of vehicle, through which communications will be made, while it shall temper the rays of (what would be otherwise) unsufferable glory. Thus its flexibility will prevent all obstructions to the spirit; and the materiality of its nature, will make it capable of subserving those purposes which are wanting to be supplied.

† We here behold our organs of speech exactly suited to the station which we hold in existence, and to the region which we inhabit. And this suitableness has been directed by infinite goodness, to accompany our changes of existence; to accommodate our wants in this temporary abode. † From these circumstances, we are therefore justified in inferring, that when the change of death shall pass

upon us, another important alteration will take place in our organical départements, by which they shall be prepared for those regions which they shall inherit for ever. Through this process, new faculties will, without all doubt, make their appearance, which are now in an embryo state; just as those faculties did which we now possess, and which before our birth, were in a similar embryo state. In those changes which we expect to undergo, many of our present organs shall be done away; many new ones shall appear; many shall undergo a new modification, and supply present defects; so that the whole shall form the most important epoch in human existence; and thus the revolution of our bodily powers, which shall commence in death, shall move onward in progression through the grave, and be finally consummated in the resurrection of the dead.

Under all those various considerations, from whence I have endeavoured to infer the resurrection of the body, the changes through which it must pass,—and the mode of being which it shall sustain hereafter, our expectations are not equal to the certainties which we possess, and from which the inferences have been made. The distance between an embryo state and the present life, is not so great as that which lies between this life and the next; and yet we have seen greater changes result from *that*, than any which we expect from *this*. And if changes *less* extensive in *station*, have produced changes *more* extensive in *condition*; the inferences which we have made are perfectly justifiable upon principles of analogical reasoning; and when the greatest

of all possible changes shall take place, we may expect with justice effects of the last importance to follow.

The distance from *death* to *another life* is much greater than from an *embryo state* to the *present condition of man*: but, as the changes which we expect to result from the former are not so great in proportion, as those which we have already seen resulting from the latter; our expectations of a resurrection and of the consequent state of the body, are founded upon the certainty of what has already taken place in man. ✕ On this point let it be finally observed, that when we view man in an embryo-state, abstracted from every other consideration, we can perceive nothing to justify our expectations that he will be possessed of those senses which afterwards develope themselves; but, when we view him in his present state, we reason from what has already taken place; we take his acquirements as the data of our future speculations, and from thence infer those astonishing perfections and changes which are reserved for a future life. ✕ Hence we may with safety conclude, from these branches of analogical reasoning, that we have before us all the evidence which can be expected from this quarter. The whole seems to terminate in moral certainty, and to produce, in the reflecting mind, a full conviction of the fact which we intend to establish.

But, there are other branches which it may not be improper to introduce; because they will tend to illuminate the shades with which we are encircled. The mediums, through which our present

mode of life is preserved, are peculiarly adapted to our present condition of life. But these mediums must be exclusively confined to our present abode. Before it took place, and after it shall be done away, the mediums of preservation to which I allude can have no suitable application.

We have seen a state of existence, in which *teeth* were not in being in the early stages of infancy : because they were not necessary to that state. The stomach and the intestines existed only in embryo, as preparatory to the present state ; and though nutrition and existence are inseparably connected in the present, we may easily learn from this circumstance that the connection is only of a local nature. Why then may we not rationally conclude, though all these instruments of nutrition shall be done away, that existence shall continue in a future state of being, in which all future occasions for them will be removed ; and in which they must be either useless or unknown ? Analogy will justify this conclusion ; though we cannot comprehend how existence can be possible without respiration, and without nutritive aid.

A material being that can continue to exist without nutrition, must exist in ways and modes totally different from those with which we are acquainted. And the supposition that our bodies can survive in this manner, necessarily implies that they must have undergone such surprising changes as we have already hinted, but which we have never actually known. The difference between the condition of an embryo in the womb and that of an adult in the

enjoyment of life, can bear but a faint resemblance to the distance between the constitution of an adult, and the constitution of his body beyond the grave.

In all the modes of animal existence, with which we are acquainted, nutrition seems to be a necessary adjunct of life ; and it will baffle our deepest researches to contrive a mode, through which life may be preserved without it. But, this can amount to no argument against the fact. It will be produced, in all probability, by ways the most astonishing, and yet the most simple, and burst upon our amazed understandings, in ways which can only be comprehended by faculties which we do not at present possess, and of which we cannot have a distant apprehension.

As the faculties, which we now have, are insufficient to comprehend that simple mode of existence, which God has reserved for our bodies hereafter ; death itself, which we view as the greatest evil, may be necessary, not only to produce that mode of life, but also to mature those organs by which alone the knowledge of the fact can reach our intellectual powers. The mode of such a state of being, and the faculties by which alone it can be apprehended, are therefore, in all probability, as remote from our present state and our present faculties, as these are from the mode of life, and the comprehension of an embryo in the womb. †

In all cases the existence of the percipient faculty is necessary to the comprehension of the objects which are adapted to it ; we may therefore justly infer, that all our attempts to comprehend those real-

ities which lie beyond the grave, must be vague and unsatisfactory ; until the realities themselves shall burst upon us, with an evidence (like that of light or sound) which is irresistible.

We may, however, have a sufficiency of evidence to ascertain the fact ; though the way in which it shall be accomplished should remain unknown. This is no more than what we experience in the present life. We know the existence of many facts, though the manner in which they exist is hidden from our researches. In like manner, we may be certified of the resurrection of our bodies from the grave ; though the way in which it shall be accomplished remain perfectly concealed.

The evidences of these two ideas are perfectly distinct in their natures. The former we gather from strong intimations, and express declarations given us by God ; but the latter we can only learn from an intimate acquaintance with causes and effects ;—the influence and secret operation of active and passive energies, which we can but imperfectly trace in those things which are natural, and with which we are encircled on every side. Of the former of these ideas we have continual proof ; but of the latter we rarely obtain any satisfactory information.

The probability of a resurrection is much greater than the probability of its not taking place ; and it is our duty to close with that side “*where one grain would turn the scale.*” Even they with whom it is thought a thing *incredible, that God should raise the dead*, can only found their assertions on the de-

lusive appearance of the body in a state of death, and their own ability to comprehend the fact. The speculations, into which I have entered, have already anticipated the arguments which might be drawn from these sources ; facts of a more unpropitious appearance have teemed with favourable realities, and presented us with life and energy from a chaotic mass. A subject of this nature must always be encumbered with difficulties ; to divest it of them is totally impossible ; it is therefore an unalterable dictate of reason, in such cases, to close with that side where fewest difficulties are.

In this gloomy region of probable conjecture, we cannot hope for evidence of a much brighter nature than that which God has afforded us. The twilight of our situation affords nothing totally divested of shadows ; and we violate the principles of order, whenever we aim at evidence which is foreign to our state.

An intimate acquaintance with the internal constitution of substances, whether simple, modified, or organized ; is what we cannot hope to attain in the present life. It is for us to know the facts, with which we are encircled, and the effects which result from any peculiar organization ; but an intimate acquaintance with the causes which combine to produce these effects, together with the internal constitution of organized beings, amounts to a mode of knowledge which may be possessed by higher orders of intelligent beings, with as much precision as we now know the facts themselves, and those effects which result from them. And, it is not improbable

that the period will arrive, when human nature, after having passed through the necessary preparations, will be capable of comprehending with equal precision, those astonishing events which we now attempt with so much difficulty to explore.

SECT. V.

Arguments to prove that Gravitation must be inapplicable to our future Bodies in another World ; and that the Loss of Gravitation, will make a considerable Distinction between these Bodies which we now have, and those which shall be hereafter.

THAT gravitation, whatever its nature may be, is inseparable from all portions of matter through the whole empire of nature, with which we are acquainted, it would be foolish to prove, and useless to deny. It is from this circumstance, that gravitation has been included by some, among the essential properties of matter. Our local observations give sanction to the supposition, and in those cases which submit themselves to the evidences of our senses, it is demonstrated by fact. But, whether gravitation is really inseparable from material substances, or whether it does not depend upon the local circumstances of time and place ; are questions of considerable import, which will issue in consequences totally distinct from one another.

In our present abode, the detached particles of

matter gravitate towards the centre of the earth ; and the earth, with its appendages, gravitates towards the sun. By the same mode of reasoning, we have satisfactory evidence, that all the orbs which compose the solar system feel a proportional impression : even if we take into the account the eccentricities of the comets, which seem to be the most erratic of all the heavenly bodies with which we are acquainted.

But, though the various bodies of the solar system thus gravitate towards their common centre ; it will not follow that the whole system, when taken in an aggregate point of view, gravitates towards any other system in the universe. It will indeed admit of much probable evidence, that no such gravitation either does or can exist. For, if gravitation can exist, in the solar system, towards any other system whatever ; it will be impossible to assign any satisfactory reason why the branches of different systems continue apart from one another ; and to say what has prevented that contact, which necessarily results from the action of gravitating bodies.

That the worlds, which God has fixed in the immensity of space, are infinite in their extent, I believe no man will affirm ; the exterior systems can therefore have nothing to prevent them falling immediately upon those which are most contiguous. The second, after having overcome the first, must act in the same manner towards its neighbouring system, till that also sinks in ruin ; and thus destruction must press upon destruction, till those

worlds which now adhere to their respective systems, are reduced to a state of confusion, and blended together in one chaotic mass.

The existence of the various systems with which we are surrounded, and of which we make a part, proves that no such effects have taken place ; and hence we may rationally presume that no such extent of gravitation does exist. And, since the general convulsion of the universe would inevitably ensue, if such an operative power were to pervade the great inane ; the order which subsists throughout the universe indubitably proves, that no such property as gravitation can diffuse its influence through *universal nature*, nor probably reach beyond the different systems to which its influence is confined.

From these principles, it is fairly to be inferred, that, although gravitation is so closely interwoven with the whole system of matter, in all the forms into which it has been modified, as to be naturally inseparable from its minutest parts, yet, that it is confined in its operative influence. And that, as it is local and circumscribed in its action, it cannot, in the strictest and most philosophical sense of the word, be an essential property of matter.

There are many instances with which we are acquainted, in which gravitation may be lessened in its influence, suspended in its power, and partially destroyed ; while the matter itself in which it inheres, retains all its essential properties, and undergoes no real change. Gravitation, therefore, can only be an affection of matter, existing only in relation to time and situation ; but by no means an essential

property of that substance, in which it is presumed to inhere. If, therefore, the influence of gravitation be not infinite, which I presume, will be admitted; it follows, that if God were so pleased, he may place a portion of matter in some portion of the regions of space, in which it shall be perfectly removed from the influence of gravitation, and from that of those external impulses which now act upon it with so much energy and force.

In those regions, which our future bodies are destined to inhabit, the force of gravitation may so far be forbidden to act, upon them either through pure distance or the partiality of their nature; that the impulse of the will, finding nothing to obstruct its mandates, may act with a degree of efficacy to which we are strangers, and be productive of those effects which at present can only result from muscular exertion.

That all spiritual substances must be placed beyond the influence of gravitation, through the nature of their existence, will hardly admit of any doubt; because gravitation, from its very nature, seems only applicable to those which are material. And, without adverting to the question, whether those ethereal vehicles, through which they communicate their ideas to one another, be composed of something which is analogous to matter or not; it seems an unquestionable point, that our conceptions of their being totally destitute of gravitation, form a striking circumstance in our notions of their spirituality. While, on the contrary, those substances which are visible to our senses, having a certain de-

gree of specific gravity, incorporated in their natures, mark out for us a clear distinction between themselves and those substances which we denominate spiritual.

The human body, having this power of gravitation in its present state, in common with all sublunary beings and things ; may, with much propriety, be said to be *natural*, in opposition to those ethereal vehicles, which from their being destitute of gravitation, are denominated *spiritual*. But, the changes which these material bodies shall undergo at death, will probably separate them from the influence of this principle hereafter. And, their being divested of this quality, which we have already supposed, is not an essential property of matter; will give to them that mode of being, at which *St. Paul* hints, when he tells us, *there is a spiritual body*. For, when all gravitating tendencies shall be withdrawn from that portion of matter, which shall constitute our bodies hereafter ; they must assimilate in nature with those spiritual substances, on which the affection of gravity had never been impressed. By this assimilation of nature to spiritual substances, and this loss of one of those *present* essential qualities by which we distinguish matter from spirit, and one portion of matter from another ; we arrive at a solution of that complex assertion which *St. Paul* has made—*There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body*.

The matter, of which our future bodies shall be composed, will, without all doubt, continue to retain all those properties which are in reality essential to

its nature ; and will lose nothing in point of nature, but this ideal property and those sensible qualities, which local existence had incorporated with its being in the present state. To announce the nature of our bodies, thus circumstanced, and thus situated in a future state, perhaps no expression could be found more appropriate within the compass of language, than that which St. Paul had happily selected, when he called the companion of our soul, *a spiritual body*. We have, therefore, every reason to expect that those bodies which we shall possess hereafter, will partake in common with all other matter, the essential properties of that substance ; while they will be divested of that ponderosity which must inevitably retard motion, and which associate with our bodies in all the functions of the present life.

What the physical nature of gravitation is, we do not with precision know ; but of this we are fully assured, that it is an inherent property of matter, through which all material bodies are disposed to approach each other, and their respective centres.

In the present state of things, the centre of gravitation to us, is the centre of the globe which we inhabit ; but certain it is, that this centre of gravitation can continue no longer than the globe itself remains in existence. As, therefore, gravitation can only have a relative existence ; the destruction of the globe must prove the destruction of gravitation, or at least cause it to adhere to another centre, of which we can form but inadequate conceptions. †

That this world, and all the solar system had a

beginning, will not admit of any doubt ; and that it will finally be destroyed by fire, is a fact, of which we are fully assured by the unerring word of God: When, therefore, that awful period shall arrive, when the earth shall be encircled with fire, when the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light ; our centre of gravitation must necessarily be destroyed. The disordered particles of matter, which shall survive this general wreck of nature, being then bereft of that common centre, to which they had been accustomed to adhere, must instantly lose their gravitating power, and be divested of all external impulse by an inevitable consequence. And, therefore, as all matter must in itself be totally indifferent to motion and rest, whether we consider it as modified into a human body, or as assuming any other form ; by being thus disencumbered from impediments, it must act under the immediate impulse of the first power which communicates its force. Under these circumstances, the impulse of the will, without doubt, will be sufficient to produce every effect which we can possibly ascribe to our future bodies, when they shall be raised in a state of incorruption, and when death, the last enemy of human nature, shall be for ever destroyed.

We are furnished in the present life with proofs of the most indubitable nature, that the impulses of our wills are constantly modifying our muscular actions. But, by what secret energy these effects are wrought which we constantly discover, we know not ; and perhaps shall never be able to compre-

hend. We cannot, therefore, reasonably expect to know, in our present state of existence, how our spirits shall operate with redoubled energy and vigour upon those refined bodies which we hope to have hereafter; when they shall be removed from those impediments which are now inseparable from our existence. That the fact itself is possible, we are fully assured from the evidence which we have of similar actions in the present life. This evidence must silence all objections, which we might be inclined to raise against our future expectations and hopes, from our inability to comprehend the facts which are now in existence, and which, we are satisfied, will then take place. The increase of the operation of spirit upon matter, it is reasonable to expect, will be great in proportion to the energy of the mover; and this energy will increase in proportion to the removal of those impediments, which now retard the action of the soul.

But, however powerful in its operation upon the body, the soul may be in our present state; we well know, that the power of gravitation, residing in the matter of which our bodies are composed, is too strong to be totally overcome. By the impulse of my will, I can move either my hand or tongue; but it is not in my power, by any exertion which I can make to take my body from the earth, and to suspend it in the air; much less is it in my power to take my flight into another region, or to move from sphere to sphere, to converse with beings, which are totally unknown.

Indeed, every action which we perform, is a par-

tial conquest of gravitation. This plainly proves, that there resides within us an innate power, which must be distinct in its nature from that gravitation, which it partially subdues. And, therefore, when gravitation shall be totally separated from that matter, of which our future bodies shall be composed, which must be when the general conflagration shall consume the world, (and perhaps the whole solar system in one devouring blaze) while the matter itself will preserve its existence entire in all its essential parts and properties; then this innate power will be free to operate without controul, because all obstacles shall be totally done away.

When, therefore, those obstacles which now retard the power of our active energies shall be withdrawn, when all our energies shall acquire new vigour, we are at a loss to calculate upon those surprising effects which must ensue. We are called, in this view, to move in a new sphere of action. It baffles all our calculations, and leaves the mind to operate upon the evidence of probability; which evidence becomes rational from the removal of obstacles, and from the visible effects which analogical reasoning now supplies.

The impulses, which our future bodies will receive from the actions of our spirits, will probably be sufficient to transport them through any distances of space with inconceivable celerity; and to lead them in conjunction with themselves, to the full gratification of all those desires, which can inherit heaven. In our present state, the cause of

motion must reside within us. Without this, neither vice nor virtue can have any existence; because they necessarily imply the power of beginning motion. And it is more than probable, that this cause, which is now the origin of motion, is lodged within those parts of our bodies, which are necessary to their identity; which parts will remain incorruptible in their torpid state, and be our companions in eternity.

In our present situation, the power of gravitation is not all that our spirits have to combat. The deranged state of the whole material system;—the obstructed paths of organization;—the pressure of the atmosphere;—the unwieldy masses of flesh and blood;—together with the impediments which we sustain from a multiplicity of causes; all, no doubt, conspire to debase our nature; and to place us in a situation, from which nothing but death can release us, and to place us at a distance from those perfections, to which, nothing but a resurrection can possibly restore us. † We, therefore, now see only as through a glass darkly, but hereafter, the righteous shall know even as they are known; and feel their enjoyment of felicity, which can only be acquired in an eternal state. ‡

The astonishing changes, which these circumstances must make in the relative situation of our bodies, together with the alterations which must follow from the changes in our condition of being, as well as in the new modifications which our bodies shall undergo; must be capable of effecting

almost every change, except that of altering the essential properties of human nature. And, even these essential properties, which *now* belong to our bodies will be so far refined by the changes which shall pass upon them, that matter shall approximate towards spirit as nearly as possible, without losing its essence, or becoming what it is impossible that it can be.

But, were we even to admit the facts for which I contend, as well as the arguments which have been, and which will be adduced; it will be folly to deny that there are difficulties still remaining, which it is impossible to solve. Yet difficulties can no more prove an hypothesis erroneous, than objections against a fact can falsify its nature. We know not, I am ready to admit, how matter can exist abstracted from all gravitation; but we ought to recollect, that we are equally at a loss to know how matter can exist with it. One is no more difficult to comprehend than the other; the fact is, that we can comprehend neither. That matter does exist with it, is self-evident; and that it may exist when gravitation shall be done away, if God shall be so pleased, will admit of no doubt whatever in a reflecting mind.

In the present state of human nature, God has pleased to make our subsistence to depend upon food and air; but beyond the grave, we have no reason whatever to believe, that either will be necessary to our being. It is true, that we cannot conceive, how our future bodies will be able to

subsist without these external supplies; but it is equally true, that we know not how they can possibly subsist with them. No reasonable doubt can be entertained, that God might have established our constitutions otherwise, had he been so pleased; and have rendered food and respiration alike unnecessary to the support of our lives. It is true, we should in that case have been different from what we are;—we should then have been, what in all probability we shall be hereafter, and what we shall continue for ever.

But, though God has thus constituted our natures; he has not included these appendages of existence in existence itself. They are circumstances, which the author of our being might have dispensed with, had he been so pleased; though, perhaps they are essentially necessary to our present state, when we view it in all its circumstances. And hence we may reasonably conclude, that, when the present modification shall be unhinged, and all nature shall undergo a change; then those appendages of being which are now necessary to the preservation of life, shall also be for ever done away; since they can exist no longer than that mode of being does, to which they are now so essentially necessary, and beyond which their uses can no longer survive. When, therefore, that aera shall arrive, in which neither food nor breath shall be any longer necessary to the existence of man, we must behold human nature undergoing such a change as will admit no parallel; and which can be equalled by nothing but itself.

The same observations which have already been made, on the loss of gravitation, and on the possibility of subsisting hereafter without the assistance of food and breath ; may also be made on the internal changes which our bodies must undergo. The uses of food and air being dispensed with, the lungs and intestines must become unnecessary ; though, it must be acknowledged, that we have no clear conception how we can subsist without them. But here, the same observations will occur. Neither can we conceive how our bodies can subsist with them. Perpetuity of existence is no more included in the admission of intestines and lungs, than it is in the exclusion of them ; and there is really nothing less miraculous in the one case than in the other. These mediums and appendages of life can fill no other stations than those of vehicles. And the same power which acted, through their instrumentality, can act without their aid. The King of eternity who now deals out life unto us by particles, and makes use of these mediums, through which he communicates it, will probably infuse into the system of animated matter a species of vigour, which shall be inexhaustible, and which therefore shall supply the body for ever.

How animated matter, though united to an immaterial spirit, can live, either *with* or *without* food ;—how our bodies can live, either *with* or *without* breath ;—*with* or *without* the lungs and intestines, and be for ever exempted from putrefaction ; is impossible for us to know. Neither can we peremptorily decide, how we shall be able to recognize

our departed friends in another life, after such changes have passed upon us as will destroy the intestines and abolish sexual distinctions. Some lineaments will undoubtedly be preserved, amidst the general change, by which forgotten friendships will be revived ; and these will probably be through the distention of those radical principles which constitute our identity now, and which will constitute the identity of our bodies hereafter. But the exact way in which this shall be accomplished, when our bodies shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ, *according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself*, are questions which we cannot answer on this side of an eternal state.

But, these questions contain in them no other difficulties, than would have been contained in the most simple facts which occur in the present life ; had they been proposed to intelligent beings like ourselves, before creation actually took place. If a declaration had been made, prior to creation, among the inhabitants of heaven, that God was about to call into existence a race of beings, whose subsistence was to be made dependent upon their respiration of an ambient fluid, of which they could have formed no conception ; and that they were to draw nutrition from a species of matter, which to them was alike unknown, in order to preserve that life which God was about to impart ; we cannot doubt but that their reasoning powers would have been exercised in a manner, not unlike that in which our own are, on the present occasion. Like

Nicodemus and ourselves, they might have inquired, *How can these things be?* they might have credited the declaration, without having any knowledge of the means whereby the fact was to be realized. But, whether they could have formed any probable conception of the fact, or whether they must have concluded that such an event would be repugnant to the principles of all analogy; of this we are fully assured, that the event has taken place. And we have no more reason to doubt of the resurrection hereafter, than they would have had to doubt of creation, before the great event actually took place.

Indeed scepticism, on their part, would admit of an apology, while on ours, it will merit nothing but reproof. Between their case and ours, there is this difference: They had to contemplate a new modification of existence, which we now actually possess; and we have only to contemplate a change in it, which shall take place hereafter; while we have before us a variety of changes, which are really more surprising in their consequences, because they are more complex in their nature, than those are, which we look for beyond the grave. They had to form conceptions of existence itself, as well as the modification of it, where there was neither existence nor modification of it; while we have only to conceive a continuance of that existence, which already is. Of our present manner of existence they could have had no conception, not even by analogy; while we, by forming to ourselves some distant con-

ceptions of the existence of angelic natures, behold our future state already given; and the only question that can remain is, How far we have any right to expect possession of it? They had to contemplate powers and faculties, as well as the mode of being which did not then exist; but we have only to contemplate a change of condition, and a change in our mode of being;—a mode of being which is already possessed in a considerable part by those higher orders of intelligent beings, on whose nature, God has already stamped the indelible signature of immortality, and from whom the analogy is now drawn. Under these circumstances, whether we or they have the greatest difficulties to encounter, requires not much ingenuity to decide. The conclusion from the preceding comparisons is, therefore, fair, that angelic natures, must have had more obstacles to stagger their belief in creation, than we have now to surmount, in believing the resurrection of the body from the grave.

Were it now proposed to us, for our belief, that God was about to create another race of intelligent beings, as remote from men and angels as they are from one another; and as remote from all other orders of animal and intellectual life; we should feel, I presume, considerable reluctance in giving it our assent. We might credit the declaration, upon the score of authority, yet, the event proposed would make little impression. But, in crediting the resurrection, the difficulties are not so great. †Condescension has marked the footsteps of God, to-

wards us, in all his dealings with us; *he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are but dust.* *

+ On the great subject before us, we have an express declaration from God, that he will raise the dead. We have many strong intimations from nature, which guarantee the declaration, and corroborate the truth. The only objection which can be advanced, is, that we cannot comprehend the fact. *

But this objection must vanish into empty air. The power by which the great event is to be accomplished, is presumed to be omnipotent; and this can accomplish all things which do not involve contradiction; and with this, the doctrine of the resurrection cannot be charged. The mode of being, which we expect to attain, is already in existence; and the changes through which we must move, in order to the attainment of that state, are not considerably greater than those which we have already passed. The production of grain affords us an emblem of the process; and the torpor, into which many animal substances sink, and from which they again revive, and the marvellous changes which many of them undergo, are convincing proofs that nature is progressive; and that she delights in revolutions, through all her works.

In the movements of vegetable substances, the action is quick; and we survey the speedy progress in all its parts. But in the grand evolutions, which are necessary to produce the body *that shall be*, we can only behold a minute part. The work moves onward by slow and imperceptible degrees; it pervades the whole progress of time, and points

out its completion in eternity. We see, in the present life, all that can be discovered according to our most rational views of the great event; and to expect more, is to act an unwarrantable part. No circumstance has yet taken place, from the creation to the present hour, which has given an air of delusion to our hopes. In point of rational evidence we stand on the same ground with our predecessors; the only difference is, that we are a few stages nearer to the grand result. Our posterity will be one stage nearer than ourselves; thus generation shall succeed to generation, till the awful period arrives, when "the swarm shall issue, and the hive shall burn."

If, therefore, we lose sight of the authority of the Bible for a moment, and examine with an impartial mind, the evidence in favour of the resurrection, which God has otherwise afforded us; and compare that evidence with those objections which can be brought against the fact, the scale will preponderate in favour of the event. And, though the evidence may be considered as arising from *probability* and *analogy* only; yet it should not be forgotten, that all objections with which the fact can be assailed, originate in the avowed weakness of the understanding, and are founded upon nothing more than an *inability to comprehend*. Admitting, therefore, that the evidence is only of a probable and analogical nature; yet these faint intimations of nature, when collected from their various channels, and united together, form no inconsiderable stream. They are superior to those objections,

which can be raised against them; and that mind must act under the dominion of prejudice, which will not yield assent to an important fact, which is so well supported.

SECT. VI.

Arguments to prove that though our future Bodies must be formed of Parts, the Peculiarity of the Situation will place them beyond the Reach of Dissolution. Reflections on our present and future Condition.

WHEN we turn our thoughts from the nature of those bodies which we now have, to that of those which we shall possess hereafter; we enter a region in which popular prejudices are calculated to delude us, on which account they must be laid aside. To investigate with accuracy, the mind must be divested of those local influences, which can only be applicable to the present state; it must not lose sight of that region which it is attempting to explore, nor associate with human nature, beyond the grave, those circumstances of being, which are only appropriate to its condition in the present life.

In those pages, through which we have lately passed, we have considered the influence of gravitation as peculiar to our situation of being; but by no means incorporated with being itself, so as to enter into the constitution of its nature. On these

grounds, we have presumed that the influence of gravity cannot be infinite, in its extent ; and therefore we rest assured that material being may continue, when gravitation shall be destroyed ; or, that it may exist in a distant region, where the influence of gravity cannot reach.

In one of these situations, we have presumed that our future residence will be assigned us ; and, that under those circumstances which must arise from that mode of existence, our bodies will be light, active, and volatile, capable of being transported from region to region, without feeling any obstructing medium, through which the velocity of their progress might be imparted. We have also presumed, that the actions of the soul will be of sufficient energy to put the body in motion, with a degree of vigour which shall be infinitely superior to that with which our bodies are now impelled to action ; so that the impulses of the soul will supersede the necessity of muscular exertion.

These grounds being admitted, the real quantity of matter, of which our bodies shall be composed, can have no influence upon the final result. Where all power of resistance is removed, masses of all dimensions must submit to action. The inertness of matter must give way to the smallest impulse ; and action must be the necessary result. Whether, therefore, our future bodies shall be composed of those radical principles, which now constitute their respective identities, without the admission of any other additional particles ; or, whether we suppose that a vast number of others shall incorporate with

those radical parts ; the principles themselves, upon which we have proceeded, cannot be effected by the decision. The impelling energy, by which alone action can be produced, must operate alike where all resistance is actually removed ;—and all matter in such a situation must be in a passive state.

But, there is another question of considerable importance, which remains to be discussed. Whether the bodies, which we shall have hereafter, contain many particles or only a comparatively few, certain it is that they will be material. If they are material, they must be formed of parts ; and if formed of parts, which are separable in their natures, on what ground have we any just reason to expect that they will adhere together for ever ?

It has been said, in an early stage of this work, that all bodies which are formed of parts, include within themselves a natural tendency to dissolution. —That the particles which have been taken from a different element, to compose distinct bodies, are only detained in their new departments by an adhesive power ; but the instant that the adhesive power ceases to operate, these particles, being discharged from their confinement, naturally repair to their elementary abodes. These principles, while they apply to all material objects, must necessarily be applicable to the body of man. They were applicable to the human body, when God called it into being ; and have acted upon it through every stage, which human nature has hitherto passed. It is on this account, death has passed upon all

men, and reduced the visible parts of those who have departed this life, to a state of corruption, and finally caused the dissolving parts to mingle with the dust.

It was to counteract this natural tendency, in the primæval condition of man, that God introduced the tree of life. The salubrious efficacy of the fruit, which the introduction of that tree imparted, seemed to be designed by God as a preservative of human vigour. And, it is more than probable that, if moral evil had never entered into the world, the fruit of this tree would have counteracted that tendency to dissolution, which seems inseparable from all compounded bodies; and would have lengthened out human life to a protracted period; until God should have been pleased to translate mankind into another abode, in which probation should be consummated in reward.

But, when moral evil entered into the world, the whole face of things became reversed. The tree of life was no longer permitted to impart its efficacy; the influence of the elements began immediately to operate; and the natural tendency to dissolution, which was included in the human body, finally terminated in a total separation of all its parts. It is thus *sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and thus death hath passed upon all men, because all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* †

But, though in all compounded bodies there is a natural tendency to dissolution; we cannot sup-

pose that it can extend beyond the grave. Were this the case, the perpetuity of the human body would stand on a very precarious foundation; and we could have no reasonable assurance that the particles of which it shall be composed, shall adhere for ever; unless God were to introduce some medium, through which it should be preserved, somewhat analogous to the tree of life. But, even of this we could have but very inadequate conceptions. The mode of being, which our bodies shall assume hereafter, seems to be of a nature which precludes the necessity of food, and of all external aid. x Their vigour will be drawn from the fountain of all perfection, without the necessity of these precarious supplies; and they will be placed in a region where these tendencies shall be unknown. x

The natural tendencies to dissolution, which are incorporated in all compounded bodies, are most probably derived both from external and internal causes in the present life. *Attracted*, and *impelled*, *influenced* by the *atmosphere*, and constantly acted upon by the power of *gravitation*; the gross materials which compose our bodies, can find no rest till they are resolved into their pristine elements, and adhere to those common centres to which they invariably tend. x The various forms, in which they are assailed, must conspire to dislodge them from the stations which they occupy in our bodies, and to reduce them to that state in which they were, before the formation of man.

As all matter is perfectly indifferent to motion and rest, we can have no reason to imagine that any change whatever would pass upon the body, even in the present state, if all external impulses, and all internal tendencies were totally removed. A particle, which is placed beyond the reach of influence and tendency, must necessarily preserve its station, whatever that station may be. We can have no more reason to suppose that it will remove to-morrow, than we had that it would move to-day; and the same reasons will hold good next week, next month, next year, and so on for ever. If one particle could not remove from that station, neither could another under the same circumstances; and that for the same reason. And those reasons, which will account for the establishment of two particles, will account for all those which compose our bodies; and clearly place them, even in the present life, beyond the influence of putrefaction and change. And, as these consequences are undeniable, admitting the principles upon which they are founded; it plainly follows, that those tendencies, which are lodged within the parts, of which our bodies are composed, as well as the various influences which they feel, are not essential to compounded bodies, though inseparable from them in the present state.

When we look into that world, which we hope to inherit beyond the grave, we behold a condition of being similar to that which we have just supposed. It is a region, in which neither atmosphere nor gra-

vation can act upon our bodies; and in which every tendency to dissolution shall be perfectly unknown.

In what form our bodies may be constituted, or by what secret cement the particles of which they may be composed, shall be united; are points into which we do not now inquire. But, even admitting the cement to be no other than that which unites our parts in the present life; we can have no conception that they can possibly dissolve. Though the parts are material, they can have no tendency to remove from those stations which they occupy; because the earth, which is their centre of gravitation, shall be destroyed. *Ascent* and *descent* are terms, which in that region must lose all distinctions; and not a single atom will discover a tendency, to remove from that station which it sustains.

Even the cardinal points, by which we now measure out into distinct portions both heaven and earth, will probably be totally unknown; and we shall feel ourselves as unable to measure *directions*, when these points are destroyed, as we shall to measure the *succession of duration*, when time shall be no more. Every particle must hang upon its own centre, and find itself as much at home, as those are which now adhere to the centre of our globe. The situation of those particles must be much the same, in these relations, as that of an intelligent man would be, if the globe on which he stands were annihilated in an instant beneath his feet, and he were left floating in the abyss of space.

The relative ideas of *high* and *low*, *up* and *down*, in such a situation, must necessarily be destroyed. The influence of attraction and gravity might remain in the case which we have supposed ; and he, who was left floating in the desolated abyss of space might be put in motion by those distant bodies which exerted their powers ; but, even from these distant influences, the atoms of our future bodies must necessarily be exempted ; and, being once fixed in their stations, they must retain their abodes for ever.

On these grounds, the perpetuity of our bodies, though they will be material, can be rationally accounted for ; and we see them fixed upon a permanent foundation, notwithstanding they are of a compounded nature, and though all compounded bodies have within them a natural tendency to dissolution. The evidence, through which we may be assured of their perpetual duration, leaves no more doubt upon the mind of the certainty of the fact, than the mind can have of the *durability* of that matter of which they are composed.

In many cases, it is a peculiar characteristic of truth, that it is of an illustrative nature. Facts sometimes associate together ; and it not unfrequently happens, that the establishment of one fact places it in a situation to corroborate another. It is peculiar to those facts, which we have been contemplating, that they occupy both stations ; while they render themselves conspicuous by the light which they impart.

The *removal* of our bodies from these abodes, is associated with *a change of condition* ; and *a change in the modification of our material parts*. These branches are inseparable from one another, and are so closely interwoven, that it is scarcely possible for us to conceive either, detached from its connections. In point of evidence they afford to each other mutual support ; the first leads immediately to the second, and the second involves the third by an inevitable consequence. Uniformity is visible in the midst of astonishment. Our mind may retire from the survey of a scene so awful ; but, we must acknowledge consistency, even though we withhold belief.

These associating truths immediately lead to others, which are equally important and interesting with themselves. They diffuse light over those regions, through which we have already travelled ; they raise conjecture into probability, and give to probability, all that circumstantial evidence, which is necessary to the establishment of moral truth.

A body which can continue in existence, without the assistance of those external supplies, which are essentially necessary to our existence in this sublunary abode, can have no uses for those organs and faculties, which are peculiar to our present state. From this circumstance arises the inference, that what can be only applicable to the present state, can have no place whatever in the next. New organs will most probably supply the place of those which shall be destroyed ; but, without doubt their

construction will be exactly appropriate to the station which they shall fill. Even the constitution of our bodies will be formed anew ; and joints and muscles will in all probability be done away.

✓ Of this truth we are fully assured, that *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption*. ✕ Such changes must, therefore, take place, as will entirely unhinge those parts which we denominate *flesh and blood* ; while the radical materials will be preserved ; so that in point of identity our bodies will be still the same, though moulded and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ.

Though the aids of nutrition are absolutely necessary to our present state of being ; yet perhaps we are not obliged to admit, that every part of the body is indebted to this external support. The parts which constitute the identity of our bodies appear rather to remain unchanged. The particles, which compose those parts, seem fixed in their stations. They cannot give place to others ; nor can they retire from that rank which they sustain. No acquisition of new atoms can possibly be made ; because this would be to enlarge the identity of the body, and would involve a contradiction. In either of the cases, which have been supposed, we must admit a transfer of identity, which is absolutely impossible ; and this impossibility of consequence decides imperiously against the admission of those principles, which would involve such contradictory issues. As then, no particle can be either acquired or lost,

or exchange its station with another that is foreign ; it seems unreasonable to suppose that the radical parts of our bodies, in which I have presumed their identity consists, can receive any external supplies from that nutrition which is necessary to our lives. These radical parts are, in all probability, emblematical, in their manner of existence, of that which our future bodies shall possess, when time shall be lost in eternity. We behold in miniature that mode of life, which our bodies shall sustain hereafter ; and, though it is a mode of existence which we cannot comprehend ; it only serves, in conjunction with other truths, to point out unto us the limitation of our faculties, when we turn them to investigate the wonderful works of God.

The preservation of these portions of our bodies, in a situation, where all other compounded bodies are verging to decay, can only be ascribed to the infinite power, and unsearchable wisdom of Him, *in whom we live, and move, and have our being*. At best, in this life we see but *through a glass darkly* ; and have but inadequate conceptions of those scenes which we contemplate. ✕ The shadows of mortality hover round us ; and conceal those realities which lie beyond the grave. A few scattered rays of light disseminate their lustre through the gloom, sufficiently luminous to convince us, that we are not pursuing phantoms, when we look beyond the grave. ★

Our organs of vision, as well as our mental powers, seem best adapted to the station which we now occupy ; but, even to an accurate investigation of

the things of time, we feel ourselves totally incompetent. ✕ The influence of moral evil, without doubt, has darkened up the avenues of the soul, and prevented our mental powers from penetrating those oceans of knowledge, which lie in rich reversion beyond the grave. The rays of light, which irradiate this *field of blood*, and of darkness which we inhabit, are convincing proofs of that height from whence we have fallen ! while they serve to shew us the glory which we have lost. The present condition of creation is an evidence of our disgrace ; even the earth, which trembles beneath our feet, while it gives seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, is evidently labouring under a curse for the sake of man. Our mental powers feel the fatal disorder ; they exhibit to ourselves a strange variety of imbecility and power ; we appear to ourselves “ majestic though in ruins.” ✕

When we turn to our bodies, the mournful picture requires no colouring. Our decorations are but badges of our shame. Our noblest triumphs are of short duration ;—“ the paths of glory lead but to the grave.” Our continuance, in the midst of all that which the body can enjoy, is but momentary ; even “ earth’s highest station ends in here he lies, and dust to dust concludes our noblest song.” The swift approach of death casts a damp upon our most sanguine expectations ; the tombs of our departed kindred and neighbours seem to tell us, that *our breath is corrupt, our days are extinct, and the grave is ready for us.* The shattered frag-

ments of those, who have stepped into eternity before us, exhibit nothing but a scene of disgust and degradation ; while they beckon us to the tomb to heighten the disgrace.

x With these prospects before us, and these alone, human life is little more than a scene of misery ; encircled on every side with occasions of despair. But, the light of the gospel softens the horrors of the scene ; and points out to a guilty world, the efficacy of that blood which was shed on Calvary, to make an expiation for sin. Through this blood, life and immortality have again revisited these abodes ; and taught us to look beyond the confines of the grave, for a scene of felicity that can never end. Through this *blood of sprinkling* the natural effects of sin are counteracted ; and salvation from the moral consequences of that fatal malady is freely offered to the sons of men. ✞

Through the efficacy of the atonement, we expect a renewal of our *material*, our *moral*, and *intellectual* nature. The renewal of our moral nature we expect in time, and wait till the day of eternity for the accomplishment of the rest. The prospects, which are afforded us, of that glory which God has reserved in store for them that love him, are sufficiently revealed to animate our hopes ; but at the same time they are so veiled in shadows, that a consummation is not to be expected, till we enter into another world.

In that important æra, when the final renovation of all nature shall take place ; when our intellectual powers shall be restored to the full possession of

their pristine vigour; and shall be delivered from those impediments which now embarrass and obstruct their movements; we shall be able with the utmost ease to solve those difficulties, which we cannot, at present surmount. The action of our spirit upon our future body, together with the effects resulting from that incomprehensible energy, will probably be laid open before us, without an intervening shade. Familiarized to scenes of astonishment, which will move onward in an endless succession, our intellectual powers must be expanded beyond our present conception; they will probably move forward for ever in progressive knowledge, perpetually discovering new wonders in God, and perpetually observing new regions which have been unexplored. The capacities of the soul are like its essence, incomprehensible and immortal.

Our material parts, renewed with immortality, shall suit their immaterial partners; and afford such assistance through the medium of the senses, as shall rather facilitate than retard our active pursuits. The inexhaustible vigour which our bodies shall acquire, will, without doubt, add considerably to their agility; and, in conjunction with other causes, establish that mode of being which can only be comprehended fully beyond the grave.

But, what felicities soever human nature may enjoy hereafter, all must be ascribed to the redemption of Jesus Christ. It is through him alone, that we are ransomed from the claims of justice, and snatched from the dominion of death. It is through him that this last enemy shall be destroyed, when *he*

hath put down all rule and all authority and power ; to him, therefore, be given glory, and honour, and might, and majesty, and dominion for ever and ever.

SECT. VII.

On the Origin of bodily Identity. Arguments to prove, That the Identity of the Body can have no Existence prior to the formal Existence of the Body. That Abortions are perfectly reconcilable with the Theory which has been advanced.

ON a subject which is so complex in its nature, and so important in its consequences, as the resurrection of the human body ; it is less astonishing that difficulties should occur in the investigation, than if none were raised. Many are trifling and insignificant ; many will admit of satisfactory solutions, upon the principles before us. Some of each kind have been already considered ; and some of each description yet remain.

But, while I attempt to refute some of these objections, which are brought against the suppositions which have been made on the identity of man ; I would by no means insinuate that all objections are to be considered as visionary and chimerical. I am conscious of many difficulties, which it is not in my power to solve. Perhaps, no argument can

perfectly rescue an abstruse subject of this nature, from the various cavils to which it must necessarily be exposed. Nothing less than demonstration can accomplish this ; but, this is a species of evidence, which the subject before us does not afford. Even demonstration may be exposed to cavil, but cavil can never invalidate its testimony ; it may attack those branches, to which the evidence does not apply ; but cannot overturn that proof which it was designed to oppose.

Evidence, in many cases, may be sufficient to substantiate a fact, without being so extensive in its application, as to embrace every circumstance which is connected with it. On this ground, objections may be raised. In this case, objections will indeed prove, that this evidence is not sufficiently extensive, to embrace all possible cases ; but they will not invalidate the testimony of the evidence adduced, nor overrule those cases to which the evidence more immediately applies. The evidence may be defective, without being erroneous ;—it may be contracted in its application, without being driven from those objects and facts which it professes to embrace.

It is in this light that I view the case before us ; while I admit some permanent principle which constitutes the identity of the human body. The evidence by which it is supported, may be genuine in its nature, without being of universal application. And, as all truths are uniformly harmonious in their nature, and therefore, never can oppose one another ; such objections as may be started against the

fact before, will admit of satisfactory solutions, only from such principles as are at present placed within our reach. They are, therefore, subjects of distinct consideration ; remote from our present views, and with which the evidence before us, has not any necessary connection. The theory, which is advanced, may therefore be genuine, though all objections cannot be fully answered ; and, all that can be justly inferred is, that the evidence embraces not all possible cases, to which the objection attaches ; while the evidence itself, as well as the fact which it supports, remains, notwithstanding a train of objections, unimpeached and entire.

Against the theory which I have adopted with respect to the identity of the human body, it may, perhaps, be said,—“ that, if there be a radical principle in man which constitutes the identity of his body here, and which will become the foundation of his body hereafter ; and this principle be imperishable and indissoluble in its nature, this supposition cannot be reconciled with our views of an embryo principle which is lodged in the parent, from whom it proceeds.” It may, furthermore, be said, “ that, if the embryo principle remain indissoluble, the process of nature cannot be necessary to mature it to perfection ; and if it be lost, it militates against the fundamental principles of the theory which is here advanced.” To these objections I proceed to reply.

That a principle of identity cannot be lost, I have ready admitted ; and, for the same principle.

I still contend ; yet I must be allowed to suppose, that before these objections can acquire any force, it must be supposed that the principal of identity, of which we speak, must have a being. But I am far from supposing, that the distinct identity of all the individual bodies of the human race, have been coæval with the first progenitors of mankind.

We must be satisfied that no *body* can exist without this principle ; however we may differ about its manner of existence, and its constituent parts. But it is absurd to suppose, that the identity of the human body can exist, before the body itself is called into actual being. Because, if we could imagine that those radical principles, which constitute the identity of the body, could exist prior to the body, it must be the identity of a body which has no existence. It must, in this case, be the identity of a nonentity ; for, that which never had existence is a nonentity ; it must be the identity of a human body, and not the identity of a human body at the same time ; but, as this is a palpable contradiction, it cannot possibly be admitted. It will therefore follow, from hence, that no principle of identity can exist *as such*, antecedently to the union of those numerical parts, of which the body is composed, and from which its existence is always denominated in popular language. And, as bodies have not always had this formal existence ; so, neither could this principle of identity, which must be lodged in some secret recess within its confines.

That the *constituent parts* of bodies have existed from the commencement of the human race, I

am ready to allow ; not as actual parts of future bodies, but as simple matter capable of being modified by infinite skill ; and of being moulded into such forms, by unerring wisdom, through such future combinations, as our bodies now have. In a similar manner, those parts which constitute the identity of our bodies, must have had their pre-existent state ; not in their official character, as the identity of any body whatever, but as simple matter, capable of being thus constituted by the power of Almighty God.

Hence then, it evidently appears, that though a principle of identity which is once in being, cannot be lost, we may conceive, without difficulty, that we are under no necessity of supposing, that this *germ* must have been from eternity. We may, without any impropriety, admit the preclusion of an end, without supposing the being or thing to have been from eternity ; because, the admission of a beginning, and the preclusion of an end, will by no means involve a contradiction. No one can question that the Almighty God can give beginning, and preclude an end ;—such a mode of action is a fair inference of power. That God has acted thus, is evidently deducible from all that he has communicated to us concerning the nature of angels, and the souls of men ; and, perhaps, of all spiritual substances which we can conceive, and which have any real existence. And although we admit this to be the case, with regard to this principle of identity which I have here supposed, it is no more incumbent on me to delineate that mode of existence, than it is for

any other to account for the manner in which spiritual substances exist, to whom we attribute a similar mode of being.

That the elementary principles, of which our bodies are composed, were lodged in our progenitors, is a fact too obvious to require any proof. And since time is progressive in all its movements, we cannot avoid concluding, that the seminal parts of the human body must appear in various stages of progressive advancement, verging towards a mode of maturity which can only be consummated in another stage. In any of these intermediate stages, should an accident happen to the progenitor, those seminal parts not having acquired a state of maturity, sufficient to constitute a distinct bodily identity, must dissolve again into the pristine elements of matter, and mingle with the common mass.

What that stage of progression is, in which this degree of maturity is acquired, which distinguishes being from unorganized matter, is a point which seems too minute for the mind to investigate. The lines of demarkation, which divide the identity of the body from the common mass, are too attenuated for human discernment; they are buried in obscurity, and their precise situation is not placed within the reach of man to determine. Satisfied I am, that such a point must have an existence somewhere in the primæal progress of the human body; but, it is a point of progression, which, perhaps, is known only to God.

It is sufficient to satisfy my inquiries, that I can fix two points at no considerable distance from each

other ; in one of which I am satisfied, that *nothing can exist but unorganized matter* ; and in the other, that the *identity of the body* has a being. If, therefore, I know that nothing but unorganized matter exists in *January* ; but that this matter has been transformed into a condition of being, which constitutes the identity of the body, before the ensuing *December* ; I feel myself perfectly at rest, though I know not with any precision, at what point, formal entity began. Previously to this important *point*, nothing but potential energy and seminal matter, can be said to exist ; but these cannot constitute formal being. The death of the progenitor must necessarily annihilate that potential energy which I have supposed ; and consequently, the seminal matter which was in existence must retire to the inactive mass. No formal being can in this case be supposed in existence, and consequently, no principle of bodily identity can be lost.

If we admit those principles which have been laid down in the preceding paragraphs, it will not be difficult to account for those consequences which result from *abortions* in their various stages. The difficulties which on these occasions associate with the supposition, which makes the identity of the body to consist in some radical principle, will be less formidable than if we were to suppose that the identity of the body were to consist in all the numerical particles of which the body is at any given time composed. In both cases, difficulties may be involved

which we shall find inexplicable ; but, in admitting that those radical principles of matter constitute the identity of the body, in the manner which has been supposed, I can perceive no consequences which will ensue, that appear either contradictory or absurd.

It may, perhaps, be asked, when an abortion takes place, “ whether or not the abortive mass includes within it those principles of body which shall rise again ? ” On this question it is difficult to determine with precision ; but, the principles which have been advanced lead us to a solution of those difficulties, which the question seems to suppose. The affirmative or negative which may be given to this question, will entirely depend upon the state of progression of the abortive mass. It may include within it a principle of identity, or it may not. I have said in a preceding paragraph that a certain point must exist somewhere, which is perhaps known only to God ; and at this point entity of body begins. If, therefore, the abortive mass had passed this point before the event took place, no doubt can be rationally entertained that this principle of bodily identity had been communicated : it must therefore retain its incorruptibility, and again be raised into immortal life. But, if on the contrary, that point which I have supposed the criterion of personal existence, had not been passed, then all must sink again into the common mass, and mingle with those atoms which never made any approaches towards animal life.

It is, perhaps, at this important point which I have supposed, that the immaterial spirit begins its union with the body, and forms its connection with those parts in which the identity of the body is lodged. The same reasonings, therefore, which have been employed about the commencement of the body, will also apply to the commencement of the man. The compound of human nature must, probably, date its origin from this important point ; from which two distinct natures shall begin a life which shall never end.

I have presumed to conjecture that it is to this principle of identity that the soul is more immediately united ; but certain it is, that no union can possibly take place before the body has obtained an existence. And it is equally certain, that no distinct existence can be supposed in the embryo body, till it has acquired a distinct identity, by which alone it can be known ; and this distinct existence cannot be acquired, until the materials have arrived at a certain stage of progression, in their approaches towards maturity and perfection.

But, these are points which belong to God : It is for man to conjecture, but for God to appoint and comprehend. They are points which our intellectual powers are not acute enough to discern ; and they are wrapped up in shades which we cannot penetrate. The utmost of our researches rise but little higher than probable conjecture ; but on points which are so abstruse, it is the highest evidence

which we can hope to attain. And, while this evidence is heavier in the scale of probability, than those objections are, which are set against it, we must abandon our reason if we permit such objections to operate in all their force. The solution of such difficulties must disarm objections of their power, even though the solution should be erroneous. It will convince us that what we have supposed probable, may be certain; because it involves nothing that is either contradictory or absurd.

From the reasonings which have been adduced in the present section, I am well aware that an objection of another nature may be advanced. As I have presumed that no existence can be attributed to those parts which constitute the identity of our bodies, until our bodies obtain a formal existence; it will be natural for the reader to inquire, "how the sentiments of this section can be reconciled with those of another, in which I have said that those embryos which slumber longest in their sires, will require less time to ripen in the grave?" To this question I answer, that though the embryo, *as such*, has not any formal existence, until the materials of the body have arrived at a certain stage in their progressive movements; yet the elements out of which this embryo is afterward called into formal being, must have existed from the origin of man. And, perhaps, the secret process which these materials have undergone in their elementary state, may have tended towards their maturity through every stage which they have passed; and by these means they

become more capable of that completion which they shall assume when the bodies of the departed shall awake to perpetual life.

If a certain portion of duration were to be allotted for the ripening of any given principle, and the maturing of it to any given degree of perfection; nothing more could be required, than that the perfection should be attained within the limits which had been prescribed; if they actually appeared within the period of prescription, no room for any real objection could remain. The only objection which could be started must be confined wholly to the circumstances of the process, while the essential parts of the question, on which alone an objection of any weight could be rationally founded, could have no interest whatever in the charge. Objections, therefore, which are established upon this foundation, can no longer be objections against the fact itself, but against some circumstances of it, with which the fact can have but little or no connection.

The only question which we can feel ourselves interested to answer, is, not *in what manner a principle of identity shall ripen into maturity*; but whether it *shall be produced within a given portion of duration*? Now, if within this given portion of duration, the event be accomplished; the end will be fully answered, though the modes of its production be various. And, whether the matter which is finally matured into a principle of personal identity, continued a longer period in one of its stages than in another, the final result will be exactly the same as

though the process had been conducted with the greatest exactness and uniformity. On these grounds, the sentiments which I have advanced in both sections are perfectly harmonious; and I proceed by an illustration to reconcile them together.

If a period of six thousand years were allotted for the completion of a given process, and this period were divided into two, three, or four distinct stages, no difficulty can occur to the mind, in conceiving that one of these stages should be much shorter than another; though we admit that the aggregate amount of time shall be finally equal. On the same ground, different processes may vary from one another in their intermediate stages; and yet finally issue in the necessary completion, when the whole period shall ultimately expire.

A. may be a much longer time in its elementary condition than *B.* and consequently, will on that account require less time to be exalted to a state of perfection, through the subsequent stages which it has to pass. If *A.* continue five hundred years in its elementary principles, it must have five thousand five hundred to remain in its subsequent stages, in order that it may be ripened for the grand result of all. But if *A.* continue one thousand years in its elementary state, only five thousand can remain to complete the whole. Yet, in both of these cases the final condition of *A.* at the expiration of six thousand years, will be precisely the same, as though no difference whatever had taken place in the intermediate stages through which it passed.

If *A.* continue a less time than *B.* in its elemen-

tary state, it will require more time to ripen in those stages which are to follow ; because in its elementary state it made fewer approaches towards perfection, through the shortness of that period which was allotted it in its elementary state. And hence it will follow by the same mode of reasoning, that though *A.* continued five thousand years in its elementary principles ; only one thousand can remain for those subsequent stages through which it has to pass. The materials of which *A.* was afterward to be composed, might have acquired a considerable degree of progressive improvement, while in their elementary abode ; and consequently, be at a much less distance from final perfection, than if they had only been fixed in that station, about twenty, thirty, or forty years.

If *A.* and *B.* were destined to pass six thousand years in *C.* and *D.* in order to their perfection,—that the first stage should be elementary, and the second should be formal being ; the case which I have supposed in the preceding paragraph will equally apply. No just reason can be assigned, from the circumstances of the supposition, how long the constituent parts of *A.* and *B.* should continue in *C.* which is presumed to be their elementary condition. Their time may be considerably different from each other, in this elementary state ; though the final result may be the same. For, if in this given case *A.* were to continue *five thousand* years, and *B.* only *five hundred*, in this elementary state of existence ; *A.* would have only *one thousand* years to remain in a state of formal being before it

reached perfection ; while *B.* under the circumstances of the supposition, must require *five thousand five hundred*, before it could reach the same state of perfection, admitting the whole period to amount with each to *six thousand* years. And the reason of this difference, if such it may be termed, arises from the cases themselves which have been given. The length of that duration which *A.* continued in its elementary condition, precluded the necessity of any greater length of time for formal being ; while in the case of *B.* the scene is entirely inverted ; and the same reasons which inform us why *A.* had but a comparatively short state of formal being, will satisfactorily assure us why that of *B.* must continue so long. And therefore, from all the cases which have been supposed, it plainly follows, that the final result must be perfectly equal ; and that at the last, perfection must be attained by *A.* and *B.* in the same moment, notwithstanding the diversity which has been marked in their intermediate stages.

It is in this manner that we view those principles of matter, which constitute the identity of the human body. The extent of duration which is necessary to prepare the human body for its perfection, lies within the boundaries of time ; beginning with its commencement, and ending when time shall be no more.

Within the confines of this duration, we behold four distant stages, through which those parts, which constitute the identity of the body, must necessarily pass, in order to their attainment of complete perfection beyond the grave. The *first* of these

stages is that of its elementary principles; the *second* is that of an embryo in the womb; the *third* is that of its union with an immaterial spirit, and with the fluctuating portions of flesh and blood in our present state; and the *fourth* stage is that of its residence in the grave.

The whole of these stages are undoubtedly necessary to the full perfection of the body, they are *alembics* through which its parts must necessarily move, to attain that vigour which shall continue for ever; and which can only be attained at the final consummation of things. But, the periods in which the body must continue, in either of these distinct stages, seem multiform and various; they vary with the progressive movements of time; and though they lie within the compass of the general theory, it is plain to discover that they must be undefined.

The materials, which shall hereafter constitute the body or identity of *A.* may have lodged but a few years, or perhaps but a few weeks, in their *elementary state*; and consequently, they must on that account require a proportionably longer period either in a *state of embryo*, in our *present condition*, or *in the grave*. But, since an embryo condition is alike to all, and since the variation of our present state can hardly be taken into the account which we have now before us, it being in this view nearly alike in all; the time which seems so short in its elementary state, must be supplied by the repose which the grave affords. A deficiency of time in

an elementary state, must therefore be made up by the surplus of time in the grave; and in those after ages of the world, in which a surplus of elementary time shall appear, it will be fully counteracted by the shortness of that repose, which, to them, the grave will be able to supply.

Time, without doubt, has a close connection with eternity; and its various movements apply to our future being beyond the grave. For which reason, we may justly take into the account, the whole progress of successive duration, from the commencement, to the final consummation of time. And, though we suppose that no identity of body can have any being, before body in all its parts has a formal existence; yet, it is easy to conceive, that those seminal parts out of which it is composed, must have had a prior existence; and that in their elementary stations they may have undergone a variety of imperceptible changes, through which they have verged towards that state of perfection, which will not be completed, till the sea and the grave shall give up their dead.

At the same time, while it thus appears demonstrable, that the constituent particles which shall form the body, may verge towards perfection, though formal being has no existence; it is also evident, that the resurrection of the body can only take place at that time which God has appointed, and which is only known to him. It must be a period, when all the individuals of the human race

shall have passed through those various processes, which are necessary to ripen their bodies for eternity ; so that at the sound of the trumpet, all the different inhabitants of the world, may start at once into immortal life.

Thus then, we may easily perceive, that notwithstanding the infinite variety of births, of deaths, and of abortions, which have taken place already, and which shall take place hereafter ; the resurrection of all the bodies of the dead, will be alike reconcileable to the principles before us. Nothing will be over ripe, nothing will be premature. All are now tending to the same point, and have been so from creation to the present hour ; all will therefore, be alike prepared for that important moment, when the *piercing call* of God shall enter the territories of the dead, and awaken mankind to a mode of life, which is at present but little known.

Hence then we may perceive, that those objections which are only founded upon the circumstances of a fact, can never apply to the fact itself. Nothing but objections against fact can apply to fact ; while objections against circumstances can only apply to circumstances. In the case before us, it is only of fact that I have presumed to speak ; the circumstances of it have only been introduced in general terms, to counteract those objections which appeared against the subordinate parts of the theory which had been adduced. The fact itself may be unexceptionable, while the circumstances of it may be encumbered with difficulties which cannot be overcome. Argument may be adduced in fa-

vour of the former, too strong to be refuted, and too perspicuous to be overlooked. In those cases, all objections against the attendant circumstances of such facts must necessarily give way, even though they contain difficulties which cannot be overcome, and to which no answer can be given.

No fact can be more evident than that of the existence of God; and yet the circumstances of his existence are wrapped in impenetrable darkness. The certainty of his existence cannot be affected by the manner of his existence; we may be fully satisfied of the former, though the latter be totally unknown. That the sun is the fountain of *light* will admit of no dispute; but to opinions on the manner in which these properties either inhere in that luminary, or are produced by him, there is hardly any end. The various productions of nature appear before us in a similar manner; we are satisfied of their existence, but the ways in which they take place are totally unknown. In all these cases, the evidence of the fact is totally distinct from the evidence of its circumstances, the former is placed within our reach, but the latter lies concealed from our most acute researches.

It is on principles of a similar nature, founded on correspondent evidence, that we may be assured that some permanent principles of matter are lodged within us;—that they constitute the identity of our bodies;—that they move through the various stages of progression; and ripen into perfection through the lapse of duration, and the progress of corruption in the grave. At the same time, the

subordinate circumstances which are attendant on the fact, are placed in many cases beyond our reach ; they elude our researches, and not unfrequently mock our hopes. We have, therefore, sufficient evidence, to prove that the fact itself stands independently of all its subordinate circumstances ; and that they are points which in this view, have no necessary connection with one another. It therefore follows, that all those objections which have originated in the circumstances of this fact, and which in the case last considered were applied to the fact itself, cannot affect the general question, though it should appear that they have not been satisfactorily accounted for. In either case, the fact itself is disencumbered from those difficulties which apparently clogged it, and those objections which have been raised, must consequently disappear.

The proofs which will tend to establish the fact, must insensibly tend to silence those objections which may be raised against its dependencies, by separating it from them, and thereby causing it to stand or fall by its own evidence. The most formidable objections which occur, have been already considered ; and we proceed in the next section to give a summary of that evidence, which induces us to believe the fact.

SECT. VIII.

Summary of that direct Evidence, by which we are assured, that the Identity of the Human Body must consist in some radical Principle, or Germ, which can neither expire nor change.

HAVING entered somewhat largely into the subject of identity in the preceding sections, and considered it in various views and relations, it may not be improper to present the reader with those proofs which have already been laid before him, detached from those connections in which they have been already seen.

✧ We have uniformly fixed the identity of the body in some immoveable principles of matter, which we have indifferently denominated *germ*, or *stamen*. We have supposed it to be incapable of decay or change, and to be the foundation of, that body which shall survive the grave. That such a principle does actually exist, we have both presumed and adduced evidence to prove; and we now proceed to give a summary statement of the evidence which has induced that belief. ✕

As *man* is now in actual existence, he must have his personality peculiar to himself; or how otherwise shall one individual be distinguished from another? The human body is, in this view, distinct from the man. The body being also in existence must have some distinguishing criterion,

by which it is denominated, and considered apart from all others. This distinguishing criterion must also consist in *something*; whatsoever that something may be.

The principal candidates to fill this important station, which can offer themselves to our thoughts, may be considered as six in number; it is amongst these, therefore, alone that we can look for the identity of the body, with any probable hope of success.

The *first* subject in which we can conceive the identity of the body to be lodged, *must be those particles, which compose our bodies when we first enter upon life.* The *second* is in those *numerical particles which compose our bodies at any given period of our lives.* The *third* must consist in the *modification of the parts*; the *fourth, in all those particles, which compose our bodies at the time of death*; the *fifth is in the majority of those particles which are deposited in the earth*; and the *sixth is in some immoveable principle, which has survived the changes of our bodies, and which shall survive the shock of death.* To these six particulars we shall now turn our thoughts, and briefly examine the pretensions of each.

The identity of the body cannot consist in the *numerical particles which compose the body of an infant*, because of those surprising changes which it visibly undergoes; and because it would be irreconcilable with the principles of justice, to administer either rewards or punishments in another life, for those personal actions which the body of an infant could not possibly have performed. On

these grounds, this first candidate for identity must be dismissed, because the admission would involve both injustice and absurdity.

Neither can the identity of our bodies be lodged *in all the numerical particles, of which they are composed, at any given period of our lives*, as was supposed in the *second case*. As the human body is in a state of perpetual mutation, the supposition which places its identity in all the numerical particles of which it is composed, will necessarily oblige us to suppose, that identity must be transferred from one system of atoms to another, which involves a plain contradiction. As therefore, identity, in whatsoever it may consist, cannot possibly undergo any transfer, because it is contradictory; and, as the human body is in a state of perpetual change, it plainly follows, that identity cannot consist in all the numerical particles of which the body has at any given period been composed.

Neither can we suppose that the identity of the body can consist *in the modification of those parts which at any given period reside within its external form*, as was presumed in the *third case*. In admitting this case, we shall be obliged to suppose that the identity of substance, and the identity of the modification of it, are terms synonymous with each other, though they are manifestly expressive of two distinct ideas. The substance may remain entire in all its parts, though it may be modified anew in an infinite variety of forms. The particles which compose any given system of organized matter, may exchange their situation with one another,

without being removed from the system, or even without acquiring any particle that is new. Our own senses point out unto us an evident distinction between the two ideas; and we cannot avoid learning from our own reflections, that the *sameness* of the materials of which our bodies are composed, can never consist in the *arrangement* of the parts. Modification always presupposes existence, and therefore never can constitute it. Modification is perpetually changing, through every stage which the body undergoes, from infancy to hoary age, while *sameness* continues unalterable; which plainly proves that these distinct ideas can never be blended together. The supposition before us, therefore, places the identity of the body on a more precarious foundation, than that which presumed it to consist in all the numerical parts themselves. That supposition involved a contradiction; and this supposes that the materials themselves are the same with the arrangement of them. From these considerations it plainly follows, that the identity of the body can no more consist in the modification of any numerical parts, than it can consist in those parts which are presumed to be thus modified and arranged.

Neither can we, in the *fourth place*, suppose that the identity of the body can consist in *all those particles, which are deposited in the grave*. In admitting this fourth supposition, we must presume that no identity of the body did exist, before the

period of death or interment; because from this alone it is presumed to be denominated. And, as a transfer of identity is totally impossible, and this state of body could not be acquired prior to the moment which we suppose; it will be impossible to say how this body can be a subject either of reward or punishment, or become accountable for actions which were committed, before this identity had any existence. In allowing the supposition before us, we must presume that the body had passed through life without any principle of identity; and that this principle was only acquired when it was about to be deposited in the grave. In this view, we must suppose the body to be nothing more than a floating mass of matter, moving through life without any personal sameness, totally devoid of praise or blame; equally unaccountable for its actions; and utterly incapable of becoming the object either of punishment or reward.

If the body of man can pass through life, without any principle of identity, and without any denomination of it, why should we suppose that the body should acquire it at the hour of death, or in the moment of interment? Can identity in death and corruption be of any service to that body, which has passed through life without its aid? The supposition appears too ridiculous to require further examination; it even refutes itself, and obliges the inquiring mind to seek the identity of the body in some other region. As therefore the supposition before us can never be reconciled with those prin-

ciples of immutable justice, which can alone inflict punishments and confer rewards, and make these punishments and rewards commensurate to the actions of the present life; we are furnished with the most unquestionable evidence, that it must be delusive and absurd. I therefore conclude, that the identity of the body cannot be denominated from all those particles which are deposited in the grave, any more than from that matter which composes our bodies, or the modification which that matter might have assumed.

Nor shall we extricate ourselves from these embarrassments, if we place the identity of the body *in the majority of those particles which are deposited in the grave*, rather than in all the parts of the lifeless mass. The majority of those particles which are deposited in the grave, must evidently have been acquired since the commencement of *formal life*; and consequently, can be but one stage removed from the condition of the particles at large. The quantity of matter which composes the body of an infant, when it enters life, can bear no proportion to the majority of those particles, which composes at death the body of an adult. All those, therefore, which are deficient in the body of an infant, when compared with the majority of those which compose the body of an adult, must evidently have been acquired by the adult, in some of those stages through which the body has evidently passed. And, whether we suppose the particles

which compose the body of the *infant*, to be included in those which constitute that of the *man*, or to be excluded from the number; we must in either case involve ourselves in difficulties, which are wholly unsurmountable.

If we suppose the body of the infant to be included in the majority of those particles which constitute that of the *man*, at the time of interment, the identity of his body must consist in particles of two descriptions, —those that were *original*, and those which were *acquired*. Can it then be just to punish or reward the particles which formed the infant, for those actions which were performed by the particles which were acquired? Or, if we invert the order, can we conceive it consonant to justice to punish or reward the *particles of the adult* for those actions which the *infant* only performed? This appears to be impossible. If those particles which composed the body of the infant had no identity of themselves, they never could acquire it by associating with those particles which were afterwards acquired; but, if they had an identity, they could not take the acquired particles into an union with themselves, because in no case whatever can *sameness be transferred*. The particles, therefore, which composed the body of the infant, could never incorporate with those which were acquired, in point of identity, nor share between themselves and others a sameness which never could be transferred.

But, if we suppose that the particles which composed the body, when in its infant state, are not included in the majority of those particles which compose the body at death; then all those particles in which the identity of the body is presumed to be placed, must evidently be acquired. In this case, the body which was born is not the body which dies; all its parts must have dissipated by insensible degrees; and the body, which is interred in the grave can contain within it not a single particle which was originally united to the immortal spirit. In this view, the spirit must have undergone a transmigration, as much so, as if the soul of *Pythagoras* had inhabited the body of *Bacon*, or of *Locke*. Hence, therefore, I conclude, that, as in point of fact, the body which is buried, must be the same body that was born, (which cannot be, if the identity of it consists in particles which are acquired) no acquirement of particles can either give or constitute the identity of the body. And, if identity cannot consist either in the union of original and acquired particles, or in particles which are wholly acquired, then the identity of the body cannot consist in the majority of those particles which are deposited in the grave.

Neither, if we proceed one step further and include our bodily organs, in which some have even supposed that the identity of the body consists, will the result appear more favourable. For, as these organs may be mutilated, and some of them totally destroyed, while sameness of person and sameness of body remain; it will plainly follow, that the

identity of the body can neither consist in its organization, nor depend upon it. And, if the organs can be destroyed, while the sameness of body remains entire, which I think no one will presume to deny; it is a demonstrative proof that they are two distinct subjects, which have little or no necessary connection with each other.

As then the identity of our bodies cannot consist in *all those atoms which we brought into the world with us*, because it would be irreconcilable with justice to reward or punish hereafter for those actions which maturity only could commit; so, neither can we suppose that identity can consist in *all the numerical particles of which our bodies are at any given time composed*; because these particles are in a perpetual change, and because identity cannot possibly be transferred. And, as it cannot consist in the *modification of the parts*, because *sameness* and *arrangement* are two distinct ideas; nor in *all those particles which are deposited in the grave*; because this supposes man to have existed through life without any identity; nor in *the majority of these particles*, because they have evidently been acquired, and had no existence in the origin of man; it is folly in the highest degree to place identity in those bodily organs, which may be mutilated, while the identity of the body remains entire. If, therefore, the identity of the body cannot consist in *the whole*, nor in *the modification of it*, whether estimated in *infancy* or in *maturity*; nor in *the whole*; nor in the *majority* of those particles which are deposited in the grave,

nor in the organs of our bodies ; what remains in which it can possibly consist ? It must consist in something ; and that something must reside within the confines of man. Nothing more remains, in which we can conceive it possible, but that *germ*, or *stamen*, which has been already considered. The admission, therefore, of some immoveable principle, which neither the progress of time nor of life can alter, arises from a kind of moral necessity, which it is difficult to resist.

When, therefore, we contemplate the evidence which breaks upon us in various forms, in favour of some immoveable principle, both from probable circumstances and more direct proof ; and when to this we add the inefficacy of those objections which can be brought against it ; and behold all nature supporting it by the analogy of vegetation in its various productions and forms ; the evidence becomes at once powerful and convincing. But, when in addition to these circumstances, we reflect, that having travelled over those regions which could alone promise success, and finding every point on which we have fixed, to find the identity of the body, objectionable to a degree which has precluded probability ; we are turned back upon this principle, which is immoveable by the impulse of moral necessity, and the dictates of reason. And, when to these circumstances we add the superior authority of an apostle, who has selected the process of vegetation by which to illustrate the important subject which we have before us ; and who, to carry our reasoning into a future state, has expressly told us

that we sow *not that body which shall be* ; what can we say, but that the evidences taken in the aggregate, and collected from those distinct quarters, become at once imperious and irresistible.

Strange and unaccountable as it may appear, no other view affords us as much probable evidence, as that subject which we have chosen ; and in which we have presumed that God has placed the identity of the human body. That this subject has its difficulties I have repeatedly admitted ; and that objections may be raised against it we have already seen. Some of these objections have been considered, but many more which it is impossible to anticipate may hereafter be advanced. To these unknown objections, I must beg leave, before I quit this subject, to offer the following remarks, which may operate as an apology for that theory which has been adopted.

It is enough for us to know that we can trace, in the analogy of nature, those lines which divide *impossibility* from *possibility* ; through which we learn those directions which the conduct of the Almighty takes. But, the secret springs of action are hidden from our views, and lodged in those almost unapproachable recesses, which infinite intelligence only can explore. Another world may unfold to us an infinite variety of things, of which at present we can form no conceptions ; while the changes which we shall undergo, will, without doubt, exalt us in the scale of intelligence, as much above our present condition, as we now are above the brute creation. †

Whether an insight into the physical origin of ac-

tion and intelligence may be among the communicable or incommunicable realities of an hereafter, we are at present certainly too ignorant to determine ; probability favours the latter. If then it be incommunicable, many objections which we have in time, will, without doubt, continue in eternity. But, even admitting that a knowledge of these things will be incommunicable to us, we shall have, no doubt, satisfactory reasons revealed to us why they are concealed ; and we may learn from that circumstance how infinitely inferior the most exalted of created beings is to Him, who in the most emphatic language of scripture, *inhabiteth eternity*.

How any particles which were not vitally united to the human body can obtain an union with it, or how those which are now united shall hereafter be removed from it, or in what manner those changes which the body undergoes in time have been effected, I confess myself totally unable to comprehend. But, objections which may be raised on these grounds, are not objections against theory, but against fact ; and on that account it is not incumbent on me to answer them. Fact itself always rises superior to speculative opposition, and bids defiance to all attack. And, while it marks the weakness of the human intellect, it plainly assures us that we are ignorant of those things which are around us, and that we are strangers even to ourselves.

Here then we finally rest in this department of the work ; and wait the flight of time, or the final consummation of all things, either to confirm our

judgments or correct our errors. † How *the dead are raised, and with what bodies they come*, are but remote branches of inquiry ; we are more intimately concerned in knowing with certainty the fact itself, † than we are in ascertaining how the various changes shall be accomplished. The whole process belongs to God, who giveth to the *germ deposited* in the grave a *body, as it pleaseth him, and to every seed his own body* ; and after all our conjectural probabilities, when the event shall take place, we, without all doubt, shall acquire more real knowledge of those mysterious realities in one moment, than we can now obtain, though our whole lives were devoted to the investigation of such theories. The evidence of the fact itself, abstractedly from all its circumstances, is however of a different nature, and involves our dearest interests. This evidence arises from distinct sources ; some of them we have already explored, and others yet remain for our investigation. These, therefore, which have been unexplored, will form the subject of the ensuing chapter.

CHAP. VII.

THAT THE RESURRECTION OF THE HUMAN BODY
IS POSSIBLE, PROBABLE, AND CERTAIN, PROV-
ED BOTH FROM PHILOSOPHY AND SCRIPTURE.

SECT. I.

*That the Resurrection of the human Body is pos-
sible, proved from the Nature of infinite Power,
and the unobstructing Nature of Matter.*

WHEN we turn our thoughts to the mere possibility of what may or may not be, in any given case, we can only view the subject in connexion with that power to which the action is attributed. Our knowledge, therefore, of that line which divides possibility from impossibility, will approximate towards the truth, or fall short of it, in due proportion to our knowledge of that power which that Being possesses, who is presumed to accomplish the action.

Among those things which we term impossible; there are some which are only *morally*, but not absolutely so; while there are many others, which are *absolutely* impossible; and on that account are not placed within the reach of any power whatsoever. To man those things are morally impossible, which are not placed within the reach of human ingenuity to accomplish; and perhaps the observation will extend to all the different orders of intelligent be-

ings ; that which is placed beyond their reach to accomplish, may with much propriety be termed a *moral* impossibility.

But, this impossibility arises not from the subject, but from the inability of the agent. Those things, which are impossible to man, may be possible to a higher order of intelligent beings ; and those things which are impossible to them are possible to God. The highest orders of created beings have, without doubt, their moral impossibilities, which submit to that power which is infinite ; though they must be such as nothing less than infinite power can overcome. But, when we make our appeal to that power, which is unlimited, infinite, and eternal ; nothing but that which involves an absolute contradiction can be impossible with it. It is in relation to this power that we must consider the resurrection of the body ; and while we form our estimate of those difficulties which attend the fact, we must consider whether they amount to an absolute impossibility, or only to an impossibility which is moral. Because, how much soever the nature of any fact may be placed beyond our ability, either to accomplish or to comprehend, if it include not any contradiction within it, no argument whatever can militate against the possibility of the fact, or preclude us from admitting it amongst the number of possible cases, and of giving it a place in our belief.

We have now before us a case, divested of all local prejudices ; and we enter a region which rises superior to the sphere of man. The possibility of the resurrection is the question, which we have be-

fore us ; and this only becomes a question, as it applies to the power of Almighty God.

✕ That God has created, we cannot doubt ; why then may he not restore ? He has preserved through a century, why may he not preserve the same beings through two, through five, or even through eternity ? The same power which can preserve a system of matter through any limited duration, can without all doubt preserve it through that duration which is without limits. The power which has preserved the body hitherto in its probationary state, must have been limited to time ; but the same being who has limited his operations to time, can without doubt exert the operations of his power during eternity. And, if limited exertions of omnipotent power can preserve a compounded body through a limited period ; the same power, if exerted without limits, must preserve the same compounded body through an unlimited duration ; and that which is preserved through an unlimited duration, must necessarily continue for ever. ✕

If the resurrection of the body be impossible ; the impossibility must arise either from the subject or the agent. It must be either because the materials of which the body is composed, contain within themselves something which is hostile to life, and inconsistent with the perpetuity of duration ; or because there is a defect in that power, by which it is presumed to be accomplished. The *will* of God is not included in the present question ; it is a point which belongs rather to the probability, than to the mere possibility of the fact.

That there is nothing in the materials themselves,

hostile to life, and inconsistent with a resurrection, appears evident from what we have already seen ; and from the knowledge, which we have of matter. A system of organized matter has already been called into existence ; and the power which has been exerted, though limited in duration, has been adequate to the preservation of such beings as ourselves in existence, through a limited space. If, therefore, nothing existed in matter which forbade the continuance of man, through any given period ; nothing can exist in it which shall forbid its perpetuity, through a longer space than that of the life of man ; nothing can exist in matter itself, which can forbid that man should live for ever.

The causes of death, and the natural tendency of all compounded bodies towards dissolution, we have already considered ; and we have seen, from the reasons there adduced, that these causes do not essentially inhere in *matter*, but result from extraneous causes, which, if removed, would leave it in its original and passive state. The body of Adam, without all doubt, was in that peculiar situation, in which the influence of extrinsic causes was counteracted ; and no question can be made, though his body was material like our own, that he was totally exempted from dissolution and decay. We may, therefore, from hence make this inference ; that, as the human body is now preserved in existence through a limited space, and as the body of Adam, if moral evil had never entered into the world, must have been immortal ; nothing inconsistent with perpetual life can be included in those materials, of which the human body is composed.

When we take into our account, a power which is unlimited, and in our views, apply that power to the nature of possibilities, we are led to this conclusion, that whatever has once been in existence, cannot be placed beyond the possibility of existence now; for, nothing which has once been possible, can ever become impossible. This conclusion necessarily arises from the nature of infinite power, and the immutability of truth.

As, therefore, a system of atoms is now in actual existence, so constituted as to be endued with life; and, as there was a period, in which that system was endowed with immortality; it is certain from the observations already made, that nothing can communicate to matter, whether we consider it in its simple state, or under the modifications which now are, or which have ever been, any contradictory qualities which it has not always possessed. What it has not already acquired, it never can acquire, (unless we presume the essence to be changed, which is foreign to the case under consideration,) it therefore never can be removed further from the influence of that power which at first called it into being, and moulded it into man, than it has already been; and consequently, it can never acquire a greater hostility to perpetual life, than that which it has always had, which it now has, and which, we are assured, from the most indubitable evidences, has been already subdued.

If then, matter cannot acquire any such hostile qualities which it does not now possess, and which it has not always possessed; and if these hostile qualities are partially subdued in us, and were to-

tally subdued in Adam ; we are fully satisfied, that the resurrection of the body cannot be an impossible fact, in consequence of any thing which may be deemed repugnant in matter. For, even though the real essence of matter be unknown, and though inertness be inseparable from all its parts ; yet the principles upon which this conclusion is founded, still remain unshaken. Nothing that is impossible now, can ever become possible to matter, as it stands opposed to infinite power, through any changes which it may undergo, or through any qualities which it may acquire. Nothing, therefore, can ever arise within it, more opposed to the resurrection of the body, than those qualities which it now possesses ; and these qualities have already been overruled, and matter in all forms, has yielded submission to power. If, therefore, any thing can render the resurrection impossible, it must arise from a deficiency in that power, by which alone, the great event can be accomplished. This is the next point to be examined.

✕ That the power by which the resurrection is to be accomplished, cannot include within it, any deficiency, must be admitted ; because this power is ascribed to God. That God possesses all power, is necessarily implied in omnipotence ; and will admit neither contradiction nor denial ; nothing, therefore, which includes within it no contradiction, can be impossible to him. ✕

To suppose that God, who is infinite in power, can be deficient in power, is a conception, which not only impeaches his omnipotence, but involves a positive contradiction. It supposes a possibility of

power which God has not ; while, by admitting his omnipotence, we suppose all possible power to be included in the term. If, therefore, God be omnipotent, and is yet deficient in power, *he must possess all power, and not possess it at the same time.* But, since this contradiction cannot possibly be admitted, it follows, that all possible power must be possessed by God, and that power which is not possible, can have no kind of existence. † Every thing, therefore, except that which involves a plain contradiction, is possible to God ; and that which involves a contradiction, is not power, nor can it be an object of it. The conclusion, therefore, must follow, that there can be no deficiency in the power of God, and consequently, that he is able to raise the dead. †

In this view, the possibility of the resurrection of the body, cannot be controverted, unless the supposed fact itself involve a contradiction ; because, from the reasonings which have been already adduced, no deficiency of power can attach to God ; and nothing of an opposite nature, which that power is unable to subdue, can reside in those bodies which are to be raised.

That the resurrection does not include within it any contradiction, is evident from those changes to which matter has already submitted, and from that life which God has communicated to all animal substances. And where power is without limits, and operates upon a subject which is unable to resist its influence, and in which, nothing contradictory to the event designed, can be included ; no-

thing of an impossible nature can be presumed to reside.

As then, nothing can be deficient in the power, and nothing can be obstructing, no formidable objection can remain ; and, therefore, the resurrection of the body can afford no grounds for those doubts which might be started on the impossibility of the case. Nothing can be beyond the reach of infinite power, but what is absolutely impossible ; and nothing can be absolutely impossible, but what includes a contradiction ; but, as the resurrection of the body does not involve any contradiction, it cannot be impossible, it must therefore be placed within the reach of that power which resides in God.

And, as nothing contradictory to the fact can exist in the subject, and nothing defective can be attributed to that power, by which the event is presumed to be accomplished ; the resurrection of the body must be admitted as a possible case, if God should be so pleased to exert his power. † Power, that is infinite, must be sufficient to preserve our bodies in existence, either in their present form, or in any other which God shall see meet ; and, as no period can be set to its operations, it must necessarily extend to eternity. ‡ But, whether we have any reason to believe that God will thus exert his power towards us, will conduct us to the regions of probability, and must therefore be the subject of the next section.

SECT. II.

That the Resurrection of the Human Body is highly probable, from a Train of Presumptive and Analogical Evidence.

IN the preceding section, we have considered the resurrection in no other light than that of a possible case. In that view we have taken a survey of matter, and examined those probable obstructions, through which alone we had any reason to expect, that the possibility of the resurrection could be defeated; and we see nothing which can lay an embargo on our belief. From matter, we have turned our thoughts to power, and have found that nothing is included in the doctrine of the resurrection which appears either contradictory or absurd. The manner (it is true) in which the fact shall be accomplished, is a subject too vast for the grasp of our most vigorous powers; it exceeds our most enlarged comprehension; and on these accounts becomes rather an article of faith, than of knowledge.

From those views, we turn to a nearer inspection of the subject; and, what we then only viewed as *possible*, in the preceding section, we shall consider as *probable* in this.

In considering the possibility of the fact, as it stood in relation to God, we made no appeal to any attribute but that of power. In that consideration,

we rather surveyed matter in its modifications, than turned our thoughts more immediately to man. In the view before us, we lose sight of those distant regions, and direct our inquiries into that relation wherein we stand to God, in a moral capacity; and in this light we must behold him as the moral Governor of the universe; guided in all his actions by those moral attributes, which are inseparable from his nature.*

* When we turn our thoughts towards God, we frequently divide his attributes into two distinct classes, the former of these we call *essential attributes*, and the latter we denominate *moral*. In the former class we include, his *Omnipotence*, his *Immensity*, his *Immutability*, his *Omniscience*, and his *Eternity*; and in the latter, we include, his *Holiness*, his *Justice*, his *Goodness*, his *Mercy*, and his *Love*.

This mode of dividing the attributes of God, though just in itself, is certainly liable to much misconception; and, perhaps, these misconceptions can scarcely be placed in a more injurious light than in the case which we have now before us; because it is chiefly to what are termed the moral attributes of God, that I shall now appeal.

The division of these attributes of Deity, which has been above stated, seems, by denominating the former class "*essential attributes*," to imply, that the latter are not *essential* to God; but, that they existed in an arbitrary manner, and could be dispensed with at pleasure. But this, without doubt, is an erroneous notion. It commences an attack upon those attributes, which we denominate *essential*, and in fact, tends to Atheism.

Every attribute which belongs to God, is *essential* to him; by what name soever it may be known, in the languages of mankind. And we can no more conceive, that God can exist without his *Justice*, his *Holiness*, his *Goodness*, his *Mercy*, and his *Love*; than we can conceive that he can exist without

The question, which now presents itself before us, is not what man can either accomplish or comprehend; but what God, consistently with his jus-

any of those attributes, which we denominate *essential*. Let us only suppose for a moment, that either of these attributes were to be annihilated; into what a dreadful abyss should we immediately plunge ourselves, while pursuing our reasonings! If *Justice* were destroyed, we must have a God unjust. If his *Goodness* were destroyed, he could confer no favours. If his *Holiness* were destroyed, he could possess no purity; and if either his *Mercy* or his *Love* were destroyed, he could not *possibly* possess all *possible* perfection. That being, therefore, which could be destitute of any perfection, could not be infinite; and, consequently, all those attributes which we denominate *essential*, would immediately be found inapplicable to God. On these accounts, we are under a necessity of concluding, that those attributes which we denominate *moral*, must be as *inseparable* from the Divine nature, as those are which we denominate *essential*. And we can no more conceive, that the Deity can exist without the one, than that he can exist without the other; without involving ourselves in difficulties, from which we shall not be able to escape.

The reason, in all probability, why the attributes of God were thus distinguished by the appellations of *essential* and *moral*, was, that they might be better accommodated to the condition and to the understanding of man. In this view, the attributes which we perceive in God, are evidently distinguished from one another. The former class is evidently *incommunicable* to any finite being whatsoever; because finite would then become infinite. But the latter class God has been pleased to *communicate* to created beings, in a limited manner. These moral excellencies are now possessed by angels; they were once possessed by man, and will be inseparable from the spirits of just men, made perfect, through eternity; and will render themselves visible, as far as that condition of being can give them an opportunity of operating, for ever.

In the present condition of human nature, the case, how-

tice, and guided by that compassion which knows no bounds, may reasonably be expected to perform. When we turn our thoughts to that *Goodness*, that *Mercy*, that *Justice*, and that *Love*, which reside as a constellation of perfections in God; what may we not expect! Nothing can be too great for *Infinite Power* to perform, nothing can be too extensive for infinite *Mercy* and *Goodness* to bestow; and nothing but that which is unjust, have we any reason to fear, that infinite justice will refuse.

ever, is far otherwise. The *former* class of the divine attributes, we are assured, can never be communicated to any creature; and the latter, though communicated, has been unhappily lost. We are now awfully convinced, that those attributes which we have denominated *moral*, are by no means inseparable from man. They are communications from God, which apply to our moral conduct, and they are intimately connected with our *manner* of existence hereafter, without interfering with existence itself. Hence then, I presume they have been denominated *moral attributes*, in God, because in a moral view they apply to man, and are intimately connected with his happiness or misery, when time shall commence eternity.

But though with man those moral attributes have been totally lost: it does not follow that they can be lost with God. He is a being of infinite perfection, and on that account can never be destitute of *moral perfection*; it is absurd, nay it is impious in the highest degree to suppose it. The conclusion, therefore, appears at once both fair and inevitable, that the moral perfections of God are as inseparable from his nature, as those attributes are which we have been accustomed to denominate essential. And we have no more conception that either of these moral excellencies can be taken from God, his infinite perfections and existence still remaining, than we can conceive, that *immensity* can have limits, or that omnipotence can lose its power.

Consistently with his moral perfections, God can raise the dead; and both his justice and mercy instruct us to expect the great event. In the productions of nature, we behold an analogy which tends to enliven our hopes; and the changes, which insects and vegetation perpetually undergo, give us an assurance which could not be designed to mock us with delusive expectations. A state of rewards and punishments awaits the spirits of the departed; and those conceptions which we have of justice, induce us to expect that the material partners of these spirits shall bear their respective portions, either in punishments or rewards.

The imperfections which appear in the moral government of God, are irreconcilable with his attributes here; and to solve the difficulties which associate with the Divine conduct, we are obliged to have recourse to another life. The rewards and punishments of another state, which are intimately connected with the actions of the present life, must be founded upon justice; and can only apply to the individual to whom the various actions belonged. In many cases, the actions of our lives include both soul and body; and we can have no very favourable notion of that justice, which shall reward the spirit and neglect the body; or which shall in the same moment administer punishment to the soul, and permit the body to moulder in the grave. We are forbidden by our judgments to assent to a train of sentiments, from which our reason revolts, and which obliges us to place the justice

of God in a situation, which will admit of no defence.

The certainty of an hereafter, is a necessary consequence of the justice of God; and the same arguments, which will convince us of rewards and punishments, will oblige us to admit the resurrection of the body, as a companion, which justice obliges us to associate with the immaterial spirit.

The body and soul having acted in union with each other, in these regions of mortality, have an equal claim upon divine justice; and are alike the objects of mercy and compassion. And the same reasons, which can induce us to believe, that justice can continue unimpeached in its character, though it reward the soul and neglect the body; would induce us to believe that it could retain its name and nature, though it were to neglect the soul likewise, and abandon man altogether. The distance between *nothing* and the *body* is greater, than that which lies between the *body* and the *soul*. And, if we can believe that God can neglect the body altogether, and yet remain inflexibly just; we have no reason whatever to believe that he will be unjust, in utterly neglecting the soul. And, if both body and soul may be neglected, and that for ever, without involving any injustice on the part of God; all our hopes and fears are at an end. We can no longer look to justice, either for punishments or rewards, with that confidence which alone can influence our actions; nor look, from that source, for any recompence or punishment beyond

the grave, for those afflictions or vices which have marked our conduct in the present state.

× Let rewards and punishments be annihilated, and man is no longer an accountable being ; and the immediate consequence is, that all distinction between vice and virtue, as it applies to man, is totally done away. This consequence opens the door to the indulgence of every guilty passion ; and while it tends to increase the catalogue of human enormities, it shields the delinquent from the dread of punishment, and stifles the anguish of remorse. It hardens crime into impenitency, gives a sanction to every vice, and banishes virtue from the world. ×

But, it is useless to trace a pernicious principle, through consequences to which there is no end. A principle which leads to such effects and consequences, must be radically bad ; and in point of fact it must be utterly false ; and in either case ought not to be admitted.

As, therefore, these consequences must follow, if no distinction between vice and virtue were to remain ; and as no such distinction can remain, unless we have respect unto another life ; and no respect can be had unto another life, unless God be immutably just ; and as that immutable justice cannot be made satisfactorily visible in punishing the soul and neglecting the body ; we have strong reason to believe that the body must bear its part also in a state of future punishments and rewards ; and therefore the body must rise again from the grave.

We must be fully satisfied that unpunished vice, either in time or eternity, cannot be reconciled with

the justice of God. And, we can no more reconcile that conduct with Divine justice, which punishes the soul for those actions which the body assisted in committing, while that body escapes punishment ; than we can, if God were to suffer the guilty to go unpunished altogether.

That the body has been guilty of immoral actions, while it acted in conjunction with the soul, will admit of no dispute ; and, if it exist not beyond the grave, that which has been guilty of immoral action must go unpunished. It will not obviate the objection, to say that punishment is inflicted upon the soul. Partners in iniquity, cannot, in point of justice, make a transfer of their guilt. If the body, which is guilty, can be exempted from punishment, because misery had been inflicted on the soul ; justice must, in this case, relinquish its claims without any equivalent, and the real delinquent must go free. If justice can discharge the body from punishment ; no satisfactory reason can be assigned, why it may not on the same principle discharge the soul. And, if both body and soul, though guilty, can be discharged from punishment ; punishment cannot be a necessary result of justice ; and that which is not just, cannot be performed by God. All punishment must, therefore, be arbitrary ; and that which is arbitrary can have no respect to previous actions. And that punishment, which is inflicted without any regard to previous actions, must necessarily be unjust. And that principle, which charges God with injustice, must necessarily be false.

If, therefore, that principle must be false, which charges God with injustice ; and, if that action must be unjust, which inflicts punishment without any respect to previous conduct ; if that which has no respect to previous conduct must necessarily be arbitrary ; and if that which is arbitrary, may discharge the delinquent without an equivalent ; and if that which thus discharges the delinquent cannot be founded upon necessary justice ; and if that which cannot be founded upon necessary justice, cannot be from God ; it follows, that punishment is a necessary effect of justice, and that the delinquent cannot be discharged. And as (in the case of the finally impenitent) both body and soul are in a state of delinquency ; and no delinquency can be discharged, because punishment is a necessary effect of justice ; it also follows, that the body must rise from the tomb.

Thus then, the resurrection of the body becomes highly probable from the nature of the Divine attributes ; and from that relation in which the body stands to the moral justice of God. The moral condition of man enforces our belief of the resurrection ; it is a fact which corresponds with our feelings, and is equally a dictate of our wishes, and of our judgments, of our hopes, and of our fears.

The apparent inequalities of man ; the imperfections which appear in the administration of justice ; the triumphs of vice, and the adversities and afflictions of virtue ; are all invincible claims upon the moral justice of God, for a dispensation of perfection in another state. Hence our views are directed

to look forward to a period, in which the present clouds shall be swept aside ; and in which God shall vindicate his ways to man. If that future dispensation approach not towards perfection, with greater nearness than the present ; we have no just foundation for our hopes ; and, if that dispensation to which we look, includes within it a greater degree of perfection than this which we now possess ; how can we conceive that the body can remain unnoticed, and be left behind ? The body is closely connected with the spirit, by various but inconceivable ties ; and we can have no conception of any perfection which can apply to man, that excludes the body from having a part. Perfection, as it applies to man, must include his nature ; but we can have only faint conceptions of that perfection of the nature of man, which suffers his body to moulder for ever in the tomb. Even the perfections of a brighter dispensation, which the imperfections of the present world ensure, point out unto us the necessity of a resurrection ; and we learn from that injustice which sometimes deprives of life, that God will raise the dead.

Hitherto, we have chiefly confined our observations to the condition of the guilty, and the moral and retributive justice of God. From these we have seen much probable evidence to induce our belief, that a resurrection of their bodies must take place. It is only in this view, that we can conceive justice to be inseparable from the nature of God, and incapable of exposing itself to reproach, either through misapplication or neglect. But, in admitting the

resurrection of the body to take place, all is harmonious and uniform ; no chasms appear ; the attributes of Deity shine forth in all their splendour ; and we see a just foundation for human hopes and fears. † In admitting the resurrection, we discover how time and eternity are linked together ; and that the morality and immorality of human actions, have an intimate connection with the present life. In admitting this fact we discover justice in all the ways of God ; and discern the foundation of those rewards and punishments which await our actions beyond the grave. Through this we penetrate those shadows which encircle human life, enlarge the horizon of our views, and trace immutable justice to the throne of God. †

But, a survey of justice and guilt is not the only prospect, which the attributes of God afford. If we turn our thoughts to *compassion* and *love*, and view those sources of consolation to the saints of God ; what reason can they have to doubt, that he will raise their bodies at the last day ? † It is unreasonable to suppose that the wicked have more to fear from punishment, than the righteous have to hope from reward. † The rigour of justice cannot exceed the kindness of mercy ; the righteous have therefore as firm and lasting a foundation on which to rest their hopes, as the guilty have to confirm their fears.

What shall we say to these things ? If God be for us, who shall be against us ? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all,

how shall he not with him freely give us all things? Shall he not give the body which is the temple of the Holy Ghost? And if he give the body must he not raise it from the grave? If the bodies of the righteous rise not, Divine mercy must be less efficacious than Divine justice; but this cannot be reconciled with the known attributes of God. If mercy be less efficacious than justice, how could the claim of justice be satisfied with the interposition of mercy? How, in this case, on the score of redemption, could mercy begin to operate, and bring the culprit from darkness to light, and from hell to heaven? These circumstances prove the superior efficacy of mercy, and serve to point out the unbounded love of God. The whole stream of redemption points out unto us the infinitude of Divine love, and places the compassion of God in a most exalted light. Redemption gives us every thing to hope; it leaves nothing to fear; it promises to *give us all things*; and consequently, will raise the body, though it moulder in the tomb.

If then the efficacy of mercy be equal to that of justice, and even superior when we view it in redemption; and if justice ensures to the finally impenitent, a resurrection of their bodies from the dust of death; the evidence becomes convincing, that the bodies of the righteous shall rise again.

If then the bodies of the wicked shall rise again, through justice, and the bodies of the righteous through mercy; the grave must give up her dead, and the sea must give up the dead which are therein;

so that not a single body can remain to people the territories of death. For, since the righteous and the wicked include the whole of the human race, and these must respectively rise again ; the argument taken in both its parts, includes Adam and all his posterity in one enlarged embrace.

Through every department of the gospel, the beams of mercy appear to benefit mankind. We cannot therefore suppose, that the gift of God could ever be designed to neglect that body, which even justice would restore again to life. It is peculiar to *mercy* to excite our hopes, and to enliven us with confidence ; while *love*, calculated to awaken our affections in proportion to our conviction of benefits received, either in reality or promise, fills our minds with the fullest persuasion that no deception can finally blast our views.

The strong intimations which the production of grain affords us of an approaching resurrection, have been already noticed ; and those changes which birds and reptiles, and insects, and animalcula undergo, it would be almost endless to enumerate. Yet every change which we perceive in either state, is a change which verges towards perfection in all its parts. The revolution which animal life undergoes, in different seasons of the year, and in different stages of its being, always conducts the creature which sustains the change to a more exalted state than that which it had forsaken. Even the earth itself becomes renewed with vigour, through those variations which mark her progress round the sun ;

and we are taught from constant observation, that the perfection of created beings and things does not so much consist in permanency, as in perpetual change. Perfection in a state of permanency seems only applicable to God. To him no future prospects can appear ; and however strange it may seem, it is one of the perfections of God that in him hope cannot exist. On the contrary, if hope were now taken from the ingredients of the cup of life, we should have nothing left behind but the bitterness of despair. We may learn from hence, that the perfection of Deity is contrary to the perfection of man ; that, of the former, must consist in independence and stability ; and that of the latter in dependence and change.

The process of vegetation, to which the resurrection of the body has been compared by St. Paul, has also been touched upon by the prophet Isaiah, in his twenty-sixth chapter. He says, in verse the nineteenth, *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.*

The Jews were not insensible of the analogy to the vegetative process, which these words contain ; and the influence of their persuasions led them to conclude from the passage above quoted, that a resurrection of the body would finally take place. "To this, say the Jews, (as Mr. Gregory observes) in the book *Zohar*, That at the last day a kind of plastic dew shall fall upon the dead, and engender with

*Luz**, a little bone ; and so out of this all the rest of our bones, and the whole man shall spring forth."

* In the course of writing this essay, a variety of difficulties occurred to my mind on many topics, which it became necessary for me to touch. Unwilling to venture too far on my own opinion, I have proposed my questionable points to some learned friends, with whom I have both the happiness and honour to be acquainted. To some of these questions I have received satisfactory answers ; answers which have given me considerable information, and urged me to perseverance in my undertaking. At other times, where I have not received any considerable information, a concurrence of opinion has tended to strengthen my own ; a solitary hint has tended to confirm me in my former habits of reflection, and given a decided bias to a sentiment which before only wavered in suspense.

On the subject to which this note refers, I beg leave to present my readers with an extract of a letter, which I received from my much respected friend, Dr. Adam Clarke. "That there is a radical material principle, or germ, in the human body, which constitutes its identity, I cannot doubt. If I am not mistaken, I see this laid down, and not obscurely, in the sacred writings ; and that it has been a very ancient doctrine of the most ancient people in the world, I have plenary evidence. How the Jews may have trifled with it, is of small concern to the grand object of inquiry ; but that they held the *thing*, and even pretended to say in *what* it consisted, are notoriously evident from their oldest writings, the sacred scriptures excepted.

"Now, as a copy implies an original from which it was made, so an opinion of this kind, which evidently lies beyond the bounds of human inquiry, seems to indicate that there was an original revelation, or authentic tradition, concerning the thing in question. Lest the Jewish opinion, and the evidence by which it is supported (to which I have alluded above), should not come within your notice, I will here give it as much in detail as I judge necessary for your purpose.

“ But we are not to give heed to Jewish fables, and therefore it shall not be here inquired, who shall be the father of this rain, or should beget these drops of dew ; sure we are, that though touched by death we shrink up like the sensitive plant : yet we shall soon be quickened by his influence, whose *head is filled with dew, and his locks with the dew of the night.*”

“ In exprobration, therefore, unto death and mortality, we know whose custom it was to bury their dead in their gardens ; sewing their bodies with as much faith as their fruits, and equally expecting the spring of both. It is for no other reason that we ourselves stick our hearses with flowers, and go forth to the grave with rosemary. Our precedents were the Jews, whose ancient custom it was by the

“ *The Chaldee word Lux לוז which signifies an almond, almond tree, and the hazel, is also used by the Rabbins to signify a certain bone in the human skeleton, which is incorruptible, and, out of which they suppose the resurrection body will be formed.*

“ In the talmudical tract called *Zohar*, we find the following curious assertions concerning this point.

“ Behold a certain bone which remains incorruptible in man, even under the earth, this bone is like a *mass of leaven*, and by it the holy and blessed God shall re-edify the whole body.

✚ “ *Rabbi Eliexar* says, *Lux* is one of the bones of the human spine, which cannot be consumed, and never can corrupt ; the radix of the bone is from heaven itself, and is *moistened with dew*, out of which God shall sometime call the dead to life. It is as leaven in the mass of meal. ✚

“ In a Rabbinical lexicon, termed *Baal Aruch*, it is said, *Lux* is a small bone at the end of the eighteenth vertebræ : the whole body goes into corruption, this bone excepted. It is similar to an almond.

way as they went with corpses, to pluck up every one, the grass, as who should say, they were not sorry as men without hope; for as much as their

“ In VAYIKRA RABBA, section eighteenth, *Yalcut* on the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes, are the following words: ‘ Hadrian Cæzar asked Rabbi Joshua, the son of Chanina, ‘ How can God raise up man in the world to come?’ Rabbi Joshua answered, ‘ From the bone *Luz* out of the spine.’ ‘ How can I be assured of this, says Hadrian?’ ‘ They then brought one of these bones before him, on which they poured water, but it was not softened thereby; they put it in the fire, but it was not burnt; they put it between millstones, but it was not reduced to powder. They placed it on an anvil, and struck it with a hammer, but though the anvil was split with the blow, yet the bone received no injury.’

“ In BERESHITH RABBA (a large commentary on the book of Genesis) section twenty-eighth, the same thing is related, and it is added there—‘ that in order to prevent the wicked anti-deluvians from the benefit of the resurrection, the holy and blessed God universally destroyed the bone *Luz*.’ So much for the Jewish trifling on the subject.

“ The bone which is intended in the above quotations, is evidently the *os coccygis*, the lower small terminating bone of the spine. Would it not be worth while to let the Rabbins lead us to the grave-yard, that we might search and see whether this bone be found remaining after the dissolution of the rest. That the ancient Jews held the *thing*, is all I wished to prove; their trifling on the subject does not affect the ground of the inquiry. See *Buxtorf's Lex. voc.* נל.

“ Whether this germ be in the *os coccygis* or not, it is certainly somewhere, though probably not so apparent as in the Rabbinical *Luz*. †

“ Permit me to add, the doctrine of germs has opened a new world of wonders in philosophy; it has developed a multitude of things previously inscrutable, in organized vegetable substances;—why may it not be extended to organized animal matter? From their inherent germs it is demonstrable, that

brother was but so cropped off and should spring up again in his due season.

“ We may take an omen (continues Gregory) of our rising again, from the time of our Saviour’s resurrection. The first fruits rose in the spring, which is the time (saith Senator Manilius) wherein the phoenix riseth out of her ashes. It is the time also wherein the Egyptians celebrate their annual resurrection. We shall take this, however, but as a staff of Egypt, a broken reed, or but such an one as Gehazi laid upon the dead child. ✕ But the Master cometh shortly, and shall command the breath to come from the four winds, and breathe upon our slain; and then these bones shall live.” (*Sermon on the Resurrection, by Gregory, p. 71.*)

It is to this powerful and invigorating breath of Heaven, that we must finally look for that awakening energy, which shall quicken our mortal bodies, and endow them with strength that shall know no decay. For, although in pursuing the subject of our inquiry, the process of nature holds out unto us an example, which shews the way, and which, in all probability, supplies us with an analogy complete in all its parts, yet the quickening power belongs to God.

The power of action in all possible forms, must have originated, and must continue to originate in

the identity of plants is preserved; analogy says, it may be the same in organized animal substances.

“ For a further confirmation of the opinion of the Jews on the resurrection, see 2 Maccabees, vii. v. 9, 11, 14, 22, 23.”

God. The laws of nature are only mediums through which he acts. Vegetation is a display of infinite power, directing its energy through second causes, which sometimes, to a superficial observer, conceals the real efficient cause. But, the hand of God is really as much present in these common events, as in those, in which no natural cause appears. And, when we speak of the works of *nature*, and of the works of *God*, the only distinction which can really exist, is, that in the former case, God works *by means*, and in the latter *without them*. But whether means be used or not, the active power must be ascribed to God.

When, therefore, we thus take a survey of the Almighty God, and consider him as possessed of infinite *power*, of infinite *Justice*, *Goodness*, *Holiness*, *Mercy*, and *Love*, and view him in all these attributes, manifesting himself towards mankind, our hopes are not presumptuous, if they lead us to expect, that God will raise the dead.

Under those circumstances on which God has been pleased to place us, we must stifle our convictions, and argue against our own persuasions; if, after having examined those intimations which are placed within our reach, we refuse our assent to the important fact. That such an event is at once possible and congenial to our feelings, to our wishes and our hopes, we must admit; it therefore has, in it greater weight, than those objections by which it can be opposed.

But our knowledge of the possibility of a fact, even though it should coincide with our wishes and

our hopes, is far from being conclusive; the mind fluctuates in indecision on such an occasion, and seeks after other evidence to fix it at a point. A train of probable circumstances is ready at hand, drawn from our most obvious concerns, and from scenes with which we are daily conversant. Probabilities swarm around us on every side. Vegetative and animal life give us examples, which are in unison with our expectations; and the attributes of God confirm the convictions, which probable evidence begets. But, evidence of a more commanding nature still remains; it is superior in its efficacy, but congenial in its kind with what we have already seen, and it presents itself before us in the next section.

SECT. III.

That the Resurrection of the Human Body is certain, proved from the Principles of Philosophy, the Justice of God, and the compounded Nature of Man.

WE have said, in the preceding section, that we can have no satisfactory conceptions of the Divine justice, without having recourse to another life; and we can have no conception of another life, without including in that idea, those rewards and punishments, which await the righteous and the guilty in those awful abodes.

Reward and punishments are intimately connec-

ted with the attributes of God ; and the same arguments, which will prove that man is a moral agent, will prove, that he must survive the grave. The manner of our future being is, therefore, the only question which can now remain ; because the fact itself is too obvious to be denied.

If reward and punishments be administered beyond the grave, they must be administered to *man* ; and if to man, both body and soul must be preserved, because, both natures are essentially necessary to his existence. The identity of our persons consists in the union of our compounded nature ; this identity must therefore be lost, if the whole of our corporeal frames are permitted for ever to moulder in the regions of dissolution, or are tossed with the winds of heaven. The resurrection of our bodies is, therefore, the necessary result of our being ; and unless we take it into our account, we leave the nature of man in a state as remote from *natural* perfection, as we place the justice of God in a *moral* point of view, if neither rewards nor punishments succeed to the present life.

Our souls and bodies are so intimately connected in the present life, that they mutually influence each other ; and through that secret union which subsists between them, they perform a variety of actions, of which, neither soul nor body was, nor can be, capable in its separate state. The supposition, therefore, which induces us to believe, that the *soul alone* shall be either rewarded or punished in another life, for actions, which as a simple substance, it neither did nor could possibly commit, is not only

irreconcilable with our conception of equity, but utterly repugnant to every principle of justice. If, therefore, rewards and punishments be administered in another life, they must be administered to man; and if administered to man, to whose being the union of matter and spirit is essentially necessary, the body must survive the grave.

If the *soul alone*, upon a principle of retributive justice, can be either rewarded or punished in another life, for actions, which, separated from the body, it could not possibly commit: justice must *disproportion* the punishment to the offence; because in this case, the punishment is for *all* the action while the crime consisted only in part. In this view, we behold more punishment than crime; and consequently, the *surplus* of punishment cannot be just. If then, a single *iota* of punishment can be inflicted without an adequate proportion of offence, punishment may be inflicted where there is no crime; and to suppose this to proceed from a principle of divine justice, we are under the necessity of making *justice to become unjust*. But, since it is impossible that justice can become unjust, it must also be impossible, that justice can inflict punishment without a crime; and since punishment cannot be inflicted without crime, punishment cannot be disproportioned to the offence; and as punishment cannot be disproportioned to the offence, no punishment can be inflicted upon the *soul* for those actions which it could not possibly commit. We are, therefore, brought to this alternative, either, that no rewards and punishments shall be adminis-

tered, or that the body must rise again. < That rewards and punishments must be administered, is a necessary consequence of justice; and the instant that we deny it, we make justice to have no more than an arbitrary existence in God. If arbitrary, it may be dispensed with, and when dispensed with, *God becomes unjust*; but, as this is absolutely impossible, the consequence follows,—that justice is inseparable from the Divine nature;—that rewards and punishments must be administered;—and the final effect is, *that the human body must be raised again.*

To this argument I am not apprized of more than one objection, and that is—“that the rewards and punishments which will be administered to the soul, will only be in proportion to its own piety or criminality, considered in a detached view, without having any relation to the body.”

This objection has been already anticipated, and already answered in the preceding section. I will state the outlines of that reply, in direct application to the objection which has been started.

If the punishments which are inflicted upon the soul, have no relation to those crimes which in its union with the body only it was able to commit, it then follows, that a portion of punishment still continues in reserve. And this punishment which remains in reserve, must either be applicable to the body alone, or to the soul and body in union with each other; because, upon this ground alone, the objection is called forth. From this statement, it

undeniably follows, either that this portion of punishment which remains in reserve, must never be inflicted, or that the body must be again restored to life.

Having brought the argument to this state, a simple process will decide the affair. The punishment which lies in reserve, must either be due, or it must not. If due, justice cannot withhold it; and therefore, whether we consider the body separately, or in union with the soul, it must experience a *resurrection*; if not due, the foundation of the objection is totally destroyed, and the former argument remains in all its force. And the final consequence is, whether we admit the objection or reject it, that a resurrection of the body must take place. In admitting the objection, the answer which has been given must follow; and in rejecting it, the original argument is unassailed.

That God is uniformly governed by the rectitude of his nature, can no more be doubted, than we can doubt of his existence; nothing, therefore, which is done by him, can possibly be unjust. The union of our souls and bodies in time, when viewed in relation to the Divine nature, ensures a renewal of that union in eternity. Justice is an immutable principle, which no power can alter, no language overturn. If our actions here, either subject us to punishment, or entitle us to reward, it cannot be withheld; if they do not, neither the former nor the latter can be administered consistently with justice,

and that which cannot be done consistently with justice, cannot come from God.

The body must be implicated in this decision, as well as the soul. In conjunction with the soul, it participated in actions which involved moral consequences; and justice can no more be remiss in the one case, than in the other. In its nature, it must be of universal application; and can know no distinction between *spirit* and *matter*. Its vigilance must be unremitting; and from these views which we have of its nature, it must be equally remote from partiality and neglect. And, if neither partiality nor neglect can apply to Divine justice, it must extend to the human body, because the human body is a subject of it; the plain consequence therefore, is, that the human body, though consigned to corruption for a season, must finally leave the mansions of the dead.

Whether, in accomplishing this great event, God shall be pleased to act through the instrumentality of means, or without any medium, is a question that has only a distant connection with the fact. In either case, as his power is infinite, nothing can yield obstructions; and the utmost that can be said is, that the fact itself may be more or less difficult to comprehend.

In our present region there are various laws prescribed to nature, beyond the boundaries of which we dare not pass; but when the present state shall give place unto another, it is natural to conceive that the boundaries of our existence will be enlarged. God, without all doubt, may give

hereafter to compounded, as well as to simple bodies, such modifications of existence, as human eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man to conceive. And, when that period shall arrive, when the present system of things shall be no more, some laws of nature, new to man, which have been concealed from eternity, may make their appearance, through those revolutions which we are now supposing. And by thus unfolding themselves, and acting in concert with these laws of nature which have been the guides of the human race for nearly six thousand years ; they may give such a bias to the whole system of created beings, as may produce that final restitution of things, which we are taught to expect both from nature and the word of God.

Without all doubt, the present laws of nature emanate from the Divine mind, and are a transcript of himself. Unless we admit this, we can have no conception how they could otherwise exist ; and in admitting this, as the Divine nature is immutable, we can have no conception that these laws, as to their essence, can ever be destroyed. They may change in a variety of forms, but their essence will still remain the same ; their parts may be accommodated to time, or they may be accommodated to eternity ; yet nothing can be inferred from thence, that the resurrection is improbable in point of fact. Even, assuming this fact as the groundwork of our belief, *that the laws of nature, as to their essence, never can be destroyed, but that under such modifications as we cannot easily con-*

ceive, they must exist for ever ; instead of beholding any thing absurd to follow, we can conceive the resurrection to be both a reasonable and highly probable fact. And those evidences which have been, and which will be adduced, being erected upon this foundation, and permitted by the removal of all obstructions to operate in all their vigour, can hardly fail to produce that conviction which results from certainty, when it makes an impression on the mind.

From these new changes, suspensions and additions, which the present laws of nature will in all probability undergo, what wonders may we not expect ! The mind is launched upon an unbounded ocean, in which all our calculations are confounded ; nature recedes in part from our views, and we are wafted to the margin of a future world. The body which shall be raised must be removed from those impediments, which now encumber it ; and we may there survey it in its abstracted state. In itself it must be material, because none of the essential properties of any substance can be lost, while that substance remains. All matter is inert ; it therefore can have no tendencies ; and that which has no tendencies, and is removed from the reach of all foreign influence, is in a station which it must continue to preserve. And even, though we suppose our future bodies to be formed of such parts, as those which compose our present ; yet under these circumstances which have been stated, and which must be supposed to exist, the body can never incline to a state of dissolution. And, therefore,

from the arguments which have been advanced, we have a strong presumption, not only that the body will be restored to life, but that those particles of which it shall be composed must adhere for ever.

✕ That the human soul is appointed to continue for ever, is a point deducible from its nature and properties ; and therefore we can have no conception, that any simple essence can perish. And since such an essence must be placed beyond the influence of mutation and decay ; all essences, of which the soul is one, must continue through eternity. But these observations are exclusively applicable to the human soul, without having any reference to the body.

To form the *entire man*, not only the soul, but the body also must be preserved ; which can easily be effected by Almighty power, though the ways, through which it shall be accomplished are to us at present totally unknown. The necessity, therefore, of the resurrection of the body arises from the impossibility of *continuing man* without it.

If the body of man be necessary to the *continuance of man*, either the human body must be preserved from the power of death, or it must finally be delivered from its influence. These are the only ways, through which we can presume that man can continue for ever. The former of these cases is contradicted by fact ; because all must pay the debt of nature, and sink alike into the melancholy abodes of death. The doctrine of the resurrection is, therefore, a necessary consequence of the compounded nature of man ; and is intimately con-

nected with the preservation of his being in a compounded state, through eternity.

A being, that is destined to continue for ever, whatever be the internal constitution of its nature, must, if it be the same, preserve every property which is essential to its nature; it is only this that can give it stability of being, and constitute the identity of its nature, whether simple in itself, or compounded of parts. If, therefore, we apply this doctrine to man, and suppose that out of two distinct natures, which are inseparable from him in his present state, one shall be entirely lost; that portion which survives the loss can only have a partial existence;—it is no longer the same that it was before, but quite another. It may exist completely as a separate spirit, but a separate spirit is not *man*. As man, the existence can be but partial; and in proportion to the loss which it has sustained, the real essence must be changed. From these considerations it therefore appears, that though the soul survives the ravages of death, and is, from the peculiarity of its nature, placed beyond the reach of dissolution; the man must be for ever lost.

A being, which includes in its essence two distinct natures, must, if it survive the grave, preserve both; and if either be lost, that which survives can no more be the being which was, than that is which is lost. It can neither be the same, in *essential properties*, in *essence*, or in *identity of being*; nor can we conceive the same being to have any existence, while we admit, that one part which was, and still is necessary to its being, is for ever des-

troysed. The instant, therefore, that the union between matter and spirit is dissolved, the complex idea of *man* must perish; and unless a resurrection of his body take place, *man* can exist no more.

Under these views of man, the peculiar modification of his future body can have no connection with our thoughts. We inquire not here, whether all those particles, which were once vitally united to the system, or whether the majority of those which were deposited in the grave, shall constitute the body hereafter; these and other modes of possible being are distinct questions. But certain it is, that not only the identity of spirit, but the identity of man must continue hereafter; and while we admit the body to be a necessary part of man, we cannot avoid this conclusion, that the body must be again restored to life, and vitally united to the spirit: though it may be by ways, which have never yet entered into human thought.

That there is in the composition of man both matter and spirit, will perhaps admit of little doubt; because these distinct natures may be proved by properties which are distinct from one another, and peculiar to those substances in which they inhere. The tangibility of matter will prove, beyond the assistance of all external proof, the certainty of its existence, and leave no doubt of its reality upon the human mind.* At the same time, that conscious-

* The existence of matter is self-evident, and no self-evident fact can possibly admit of proof; because all proof, from its nature, must be more evident than the thing is in itself, which is about to be proved. *Dean Berkely* was, therefore,

ness which every man feels within himself, and which cannot possibly result from matter, nor from any peculiar modification of it, will as clearly ascertain the existence of a spiritual substance, through the medium of proof, as tangibility will prove the existence of matter. And, therefore, without entering further into the evidences of these substances, I shall conclude, that there must be two distinct natures in the compound of man.

In our present inquiry, we ask not in what the identity of the *body* consists, nor do we inquire what it is that constitutes the identity of the *soul*; but, as a third and separate point, we ask what it is that constitutes the identity of man? These are distinct subjects, and must therefore be kept asunder. We have already turned our thoughts both to matter and spirit; and in the preceding paragraph, we have taken a survey of man. *The soul of man is a spiritual substance; his body is material; and man is a compounded being, formed of these two substances united together.*

If then the identity of man consists in the union

certainly in the right, when he asserted, “that the existence of matter could not be proved by argument.” But, when from thence he attempted to doubt the existence of matter, he fell into an absurdity, which, like matter, is self-evident;—an absurdity which cannot well be refuted, because its own internal evidence is more forcible than any proofs which can be adduced. The truth is, self-evidence is the first species of proof, and he who would attempt to render it conspicuous by argument, acts like him who would light a candle to shew us the sun.

of these distinct natures; death must destroy the man, though the body and soul were both to survive in a separate state. The existence of the material part is but the existence of the body, and the existence of the soul is but the existence of the spirit; and though these were to exist in a state of separation from each other, they would by no means prove the existence of the man. To the existence of *the man* both natures are essentially necessary; and these natures must exist in union with each other, to give existence to *man*, and to give the idea of that existence to our minds.

As then, these natures are separated by death, if the body rise not again from the dead, the identity of man must be for ever lost; because the identity of any compounded being can never consist in any simple nature, which is evidently but a *part* of that *whole*, from whence we first obtained the idea. And, if the identity of man be lost, he can never be the same being, but must be another; for, since identity can no more be transferred from a *whole* to a *part*, than it can from one substance to another, or from one system of organized matter to another; that part which survives the grave cannot be subjected either to punishments or rewards, for those actions of the present life, which are evidently performed by *man*. But, since those actions which are performed by man, are evidently entitled to the retributions of another life, the identity of man must be preserved. And, as this identity consists in an union of two distinct natures, and these natures are separated by death; it fol-

lows that a reunion must necessarily take place again between them ; and therefore the human body must rise from the grave.

If the essence of man consists in the union of two natures, rewards and punishments must be administered where the essence of man is not ; if his soul be made susceptible either of felicity or woe, in either of these capacities, while in a state of separation from the body. But, certain it is, that rewards and punishments which are due to man, can never be applied with justice where the essence of man is not. And, since rewards and punishments must be administered by justice, and these cannot be administered in respect of the actions of man, where the essence of man is not ; it follows, that the essence of man must be preserved. And, as the essence of man, which must be preserved, consists in the union of those natures which are separated by death, these natures must be reunited, and the body must experience a resurrection from the grave.

That it is the *man*, and not his *soul*, nor his *body* separately considered, that must be the object of those rewards and punishments which await us in another life ; is evident from the nature of those actions which are now performed. Neither soul nor body could perform a variety of actions, which distinguish the man ; they result from his compounded nature ; and in that capacity, must stand in relation to the justice of God. An action, performed by a *compounded being*, which stands in re-

lation to justice, can only have a connection with justice in that *capacity* and *character*. But this *capacity*, in a separate state, the soul does not sustain ; neither does it appear in this *character*, during that period. On these grounds, neither rewards nor punishments can be administered immediately after death ; both the *capacity* and *character*, to which they can apply, have been interrupted by death ; and a suspension appears, which nothing but the resurrection can remove. If, therefore, we deny the resurrection, we annihilate a *capacity* for those rewards and punishments, which we admit to be just. And by our admitting the justice of rewards and punishments, while we deny a *capacity* and *character* for them in the subject ; we make death to defeat the purposes of justice, and to counteract the efficacy of that power which is admitted to be omnipotent. But, since omnipotent power cannot possibly be defeated ; justice can never be defrauded through the intervention of death. And therefore, though death suspends that *capacity* and *character*, to which alone rewards and punishments can apply, neither *capacity* nor *character* can finally be destroyed. Omnipotent power must prevail at last ; and *capacity* and *character* must be again restored. But, as *capacity* and *character* can only arise from the union of those natures, which are separated by death ; the final result must be, that both natures shall be again united, and therefore the body must rise again.

If the union of two substances be necessary to the essence of any given being, and one of these

substances may be removed, while the essence of that being remains entire; neither of these substances, in the union of which the essence of that being was presumed to consist, can be necessary to its existence. For, if we can suppose, that out of two substances which bear an equal share in constituting its essence and identity, one can be withdrawn, while the identity and essence remain uninjured and entire; there can be no real necessity for the continuance of the remaining substance. It must follow, by an inevitable consequence, that neither identity nor essence can be any more impaired, by the removal of the *latter*, than it was by that of the *former*; because, both have been considered as alike necessary to the existence of that essence of which we speak. It is like the admitting of *two eternal powers*, which must inevitably annihilate each other. If, therefore, both substances can be removed, while the essence can remain; we must suppose, that the essence of being can be separated from the being itself, of which it is the essence. To admit, therefore, the existence of a being whose essence consists in the union of two distinct substances, and to admit at the same time, that one, and even both of these substances may be removed, without injuring the essence, which we had previously admitted to consist in the union of these substances which are now separated, is a species of absurdity, for which it is difficult to find an adequate name.

The essence of being, whether individual or species, must be inseparable from that being; and no longer than the essence continues can we have any conception that the same being can continue, with-

out involving ourselves in palpable contradictions. The removal of any one essential property is the destruction of the essence ; and the same act which destroys the essence, must necessarily annihilate the being. As, therefore, the essence of man consists in the union of his soul and body, the latter of which is destroyed by death, the being of man must necessarily cease ; it can have no further existence than while the union of both natures is preserved. The separation, therefore, which takes place at death, can only be partial in its nature, because the essence must continue ; and as the essence must continue, the body, which formed a part, must experience a resurrection.

† Were it not for the intervention of death, we should have no reason to doubt of the continuance of the compounded being of man, than we have now to doubt of its actual existence. The essence of man must therefore consist in this compound while here below, and that in which the essence of any being consists at *any time*, must be, that, in which it consists at *all times*, because the essences of beings can never undergo any change. And as the essence of man now consists in the compound of his nature, and essence can never undergo any change, the compound must continue, because it is necessary to the essence, and therefore, though the body dies, it must necessarily rise again.

If human nature were immortal, in its present state, no change of essence would be suspected by the most sceptical of the human race. The nominal essence would have ensured to us the propriety of that which is real, through all those possible

changes which human nature, thus circumstanced, could undergo. Why then should we, in the present condition of man, pause at the grave? Why should we distrust the power, which is infinite—the goodness which is illimitable; or the justice which is immutable? The power, which gave being, can undoubtedly continue it under all possible changes; even including death in the catalogue; either in this world, or in another, though his modes of action remain totally unknown. +

That God will continue our existence, may be inferred from his attributes and nature; his justice demands it; and neither his goodness nor his mercy can withhold what justice demands. Delinquency cannot be suffered to go unpunished; where there is a capacity for moral action, there must be a capacity for punishments and rewards. Thus the moral nature of our existence and of our actions, standing in close connection with justice, ensures a day of retribution, whether we have, or have not any eye to the essence and compounded nature of man. And as a day of retribution is necessarily founded upon justice, justice demands the *same substance*, the *same essence*, and the *same being*. The being of man being therefore constituted by the union of two distinct substances, both must be preserved; and the body which was sown in weakness, must be raised in power.

That those actions, which evidently result from matter and spirit, not separately considered, but in union with each other, are of a moral nature, is too evident to be denied. Many of these neither

matter nor spirit could perform in a separate state. And, if these actions, which thus result from a compounded nature, are capable of sustaining a moral relation, they can neither be rewarded nor punished in any other nature than that in which they were performed. The union of two natures, therefore, in *action*, demands the union of two natures in a state of *retribution*; and we derive from this source the most indubitable evidences, of a resurrection of the body.

That there are many such actions as we have supposed, will become evident by our adverting to fact. *A plan of deliberate murder*, when carried into execution, is plainly an action which includes both mind and body; while at the same time it is a flagrant violation of that justice, which is immutable in its nature. ✕ The soul alone could *plan*, and the body alone could *execute*, the deed. The *plan* alone could not execute the crime, and the *execution* of it could not constitute that deliberation, which adds to the turpitude of the offence. Both the *hand* and the *heart* are therefore implicated in the enormity, and both participate in guilt. †

Let us now suppose that the body rise not from the grave; we can easily perceive how the soul may be punished for *planning* the deliberate murder, upon a principle of justice; but we cannot so plainly perceive, how, on the same principle, it can be punished for the execution of the deed. The plan evidently belonged to the soul, but it is equally evident that the execution belonged to the body. If, therefore, the body rise not from the dead, either

the soul must be punished for a deed which it did not execute, or the execution of murder must go unpunished ; but, in admitting either case, we implicate the justice of God.

If the soul can be justly punished for an action which it did not perform, we shall be at a loss to know what constitutes injustice ; and, if it be not thus punished, we shall be at a loss to know why the real delinquent was suffered to escape. Justice must always proportion the punishment to the offence ; and therefore can never, according to our conceptions of equity, punish the soul for an action which it did not execute, and which was totally impossible to it. Either, therefore, the *execution* of deliberate murder must go unpunished, or the body must rise again from the grave. If the execution of deliberate murder go unpunished, justice must relinquish its claims, and cease to be justice, which we well know is totally impossible, and therefore cannot be ; and the inevitable result is, that the body must bear its part in a hereafter, and be rescued from the grave.

If murder, both in its design and execution, fall not within the cognizance of the justice of God, we can have no conception that either rewards or punishments can await us beyond the grave. This is a crime, which must stand in the front of the black catalogue of enormities, and which is evidently unjust in all its parts. And, if this crime does not excite the notice of Divine justice, nothing besides appears of sufficient magnitude, whether we view it

as an action of the body, an action of the soul, or as one which results from the compounded nature of man. But, since it is impossible that such human actions can be placed beyond the confines of justice, or be of a nature to which vice and virtue cannot apply ; we may rest assured that the execution of deliberate murder, must be placed within that circle to which justice extends ; it must consequently be evil in its own nature ; and therefore exposed in all its parts to those punishments which justice will finally inflict.

If then, deliberate murder be an evil in its own nature, it must be exposed to punishment ; and if exposed to punishment, the punishment inflicted must be just ; if the punishment be just, it must be proportioned to the offence, and must therefore extend to that being by whom the offence was committed. But, since the offence committed, which we have presumed to be deliberate murder, was of a nature which neither the body nor the soul, separately considered, was capable of committing ; it must be an action, which could only arise from the compounded state of man, or from the union of those two natures, which constituted the person of the murderer ; both natures are therefore under the claims of justice, because both natures are involved in guilt ; both natures must therefore be preserved, and must live in eternity, and therefore the body must come forth from the sleep of death.

The arguments, which apply to murder, will apply to all the visible actions of life which are of a

novel nature ; and furnish us with a new series of evidence in favour of the resurrection of the body, if traced through all their parts. Though pursued in their various branches, they may appear diversified in their application ; yet the result will be finally the same, because it is evidently founded in truth. The progress of justice appears visible, when we follow the dictates of our natures ; and we see in the case before us the relation which subsists between the subject and the retribution of its deeds. In cases which are purely *mental*, retribution must apply exclusively to the soul. But, in those cases in which the action arises from the compounded nature of man, both natures are evidently implicated ; and therefore both natures must be the subject either of punishment or reward. And, as there are many actions which are of moral application, which result from the present union of body and soul ; both must be preserved for ever, and therefore the dead must rise.

Let us now pause for a moment, and take a survey of those evidences and arguments, which have appeared before us. Let us weigh the import, and estimate their amount ; and consider how far they are calculated to impress conviction upon the mind.

The attributes of God, which we call moral, are, without all doubt, essential to him. And, whether we view his justice, his mercy, his goodness, or his love, we must view them as permanent excellencies, as they are included in the nature of God. These attributes concur to persuade us that the body shall

rise again. The milder attributes of mercy and love promise the accomplishment of our wishes and our hopes ; and the justice of God, which we have proved to be immutable, ensures a hereafter to the body with an evidence not to be resisted.

The moral relation of our actions to some immutable principle of rectitude, demonstrates the certainty of a state of retribution ; and, from the nature of these actions we gather an assurance that the body must be renewed in life. The nature of justice obliges it to proportion the requital to the deed ; and to administer punishment to that being which incurred the penalty which it inflicts. In this view, both natures are involved ; and we gather from hence an assurance that our bodies must rise again.

Requitals, which will be administered hereafter, require a subject capacitated to receive them ; and this capacity can only arise from the union of those natures, to which requitals can apply. And, since justice cannot be defeated in any of its issues, those capacities must be restored : and this restoration can only be accomplished, by the reanimating of that identity of body, which apparently moulders into dust.

The essence of man, which is evidently placed in the union of two distinct natures, became necessary to the performance of many actions ; and must therefore be equally necessary to those awards which are connected with these actions. The reunion of these two natures, must therefore again take place, in order to the preservation of the essence of *man*, to whom alone, in most of our actions here, rewards

and punishments can apply. The union of body and spirit, being therefore necessary to the existence of *man*, by whom the actions were performed, necessarily conducts the mind to the resurrection of the body, from the abodes of death.

These general topics of argument afford us much important evidence ; and when followed through all their branches, they unfold a commanding force. They display an energy, infinitely superior to those objections which alone might render the fact questionable ; and by overpowering of them with superior light, they oblige objections to retire to the shade. We have all the evidence unfolded to us which perhaps we have any reason to expect from God in our present condition ; and to ask for more is at once unreasonable and absurd.

If God had been pleased to communicate certainty with more commanding evidences, than those which he has afforded us, on a subject which in its own nature is so abstruse, he must have changed either our intellectual powers, or the organization of our bodies.† But, in either of these cases, we should be no longer what we are. The evidence which we have is suited to our station in existence.‡ In order that we might have more, our condition of being must be changed ; and in that case, the exalted state of our faculties, by opening new sources of difficulty beyond the limits of our present horizon, would not permit us to rest satisfied with those very evidences which we now solicit. It is not improbable, that an enlargement of our evidence would

tend to *lessen* our conviction. I confess, this at first view appears to be a strange position, but our astonishment will diminish, when we contemplate the foundation on which it rests.

The same capacities, which would be enlarged to receive the influence of evidence, would be enlarged to the perception of difficulties, which are now unknown. The obstacles, which would probably arise, we should even then feel a wish to have obviated, and probably with more reason than we now solicit superior evidence. Thus difficulties would succeed to difficulties, which nothing could remove but that death and resurrection, through which God has destined us to pass, as the only medium which can possibly yield conviction, without being impeded by those obstacles which would be inseparable from any other mode of communicating knowledge.

It may perhaps be asked—"Why does not God communicate that evidence which shall obviate objections, as well as produce convictions of the fact?" To this I would answer, that we have much reason to believe that the thing itself is morally impossible. The organs of vision, which contemplate beauty, are the same which behold deformity; and to shut them against the latter, would be to destroy their uses in the former case. What is thus applicable to the eye, is equally applicable to the ear. Harmony and discord alike approach it; and to deprive it of the one is to debar it from the other. In this view, while we sojourn in this region of error, we may conceive that an acuteness of intellect, and a refinement of organs, though they might tend to enlarge

our evidence in favour of the resurrection, as well as of other facts ; would enlarge our difficulties also, and leave us considerable losers by our acquisition. Thus, an increase of evidence, under our present circumstances, would finally lead to a proportional increase of scepticism, and multiply those difficulties which we wish to see removed.

X In our present condition, we are called to walk by faith, and not by sight. The light of those evidences by which we are led to the knowledge of facts, must therefore be intermingled with many degrees of shade. If all obstacles were removed, conviction would arise from positive knowledge ; and no room would be left for faith. Thus one great distinction between our condition in this world and in another, would be totally destroyed ; and we should begin to act from a species of evidence, which is reserved for us beyond the grave. On the contrary, were the rational evidence less than it really is, the events which we now most cordially believe, would be too staggering for our understandings. And, to demand our assent to facts, upon the mandate of authority, which are astonishing, when they really appear before us ; would have been a trial too severe for human nature. God has therefore wisely attempered the rays of evidence to the constitution of our being ; he has sufficiently taught us, that we are not called upon to believe any thing which contradicts our understandings ; but at the same time shewing us how disproportionate our powers are, in their present deranged condition, to those vast realities which we cannot fail to behold, he has obliged us through a

train of circumstances, to find our final repose in faith. Thus then, we see the reason why our evidence is so scanty here ; and why we expect to find it completed hereafter. +

All circumstances duly considered, we must conclude, that God has placed us in a happy medium. Our evidences are sufficient to produce conviction, and we really are in want of nothing more. Secret things belong to God ; and though communicable in themselves, to us they are involved in difficulties which we cannot penetrate. A situation like ours, in which all our faculties are deranged through sin, must necessarily be embarrassed by impediments which we cannot surmount ; and whether our condition were more or less exalted, it is highly probable that we should suffer from the change. We are placed in a region, where light and shade are so happily intermingled together, that the evidence resulting from all is suited to our perceptive powers ; and calculated to check our presumption without discouraging our hopes. The difficulties, which encircle us, are convincing proofs that there are heights and depths which are unattainable in our present state ; and we learn from hence to place a due estimate upon our faculties, which, but for these circumstances, we should assuredly overrate. The obstacles, which are at present insurmountable, teach us to look forward into another state of existence, for that evidence which is incompatible with our present condition, and which therefore we must solicit in vain. We have a sufficiency to convince us of the fact ; and to obtain more we must “ wait

the great teacher death, and place our confidence in God.

That moral evil had its beginning subsequent to the formation of man, is a truth which both philosophy and revelation conspire to prove. Of this fact we have taken a survey in an early part of this volume ; and the reasons which led to that decision are there before the reader. From that fact it has also been inferred, that moral evil is the cause of that evil which we call natural ; and, were it not for the former, that the latter would have been totally unknown. To trace natural evil through all the afflictive calamities of life, would be at once an unnecessary and painful task. We discover it in a variety of forms ; it reigns through life, and finally terminates in death, which closes the black catalogue of human woes, on this side the grave.

We have also seen that moral evil must finally be done away from all the righteous ; and, by an inevitable consequence, natural evil, which is its offspring, must also expire. And, as natural evil must expire, death must be included as its most conspicuous branch ; and as death and the concomitants of death, must instantly expire, when moral evil shall be done away ; the bodies of the righteous, having nothing to detain them in the grave, must come forth in a glorious resurrection.

But, the arguments, which were adduced to prove these points, are of partial application ; confined chiefly to the resurrection of the righteous, from whom alone moral evil can be done away. The

destruction of death, when viewed in a personal character, must indeed prevent its future power; by whomsoever destroyed, its energy cannot survive its being; and in that view it may be said, that death can have no more dominion over the bodies of the wicked, though moral evil be not destroyed. But, such arguments are very remote, and claim our attention in a secondary way. They are of force, as they apply to the resurrection of the righteous; and contain within them such proofs of the fact, as are not easily overcome.

But, the proofs, which have been adduced in this chapter, are of a different nature; and rather apply to the bodies of the wicked, than to those of the good. Divine justice, which is immutable in its nature, must have claims which cannot be cancelled, without the resurrection of those bodies on which its demands are made. On the bodies of the righteous, justice can make no demands. Its claims have been fully satisfied by the efficacy of that atonement, in which they are interested; and the resurrection of their bodies rather depends upon mercy and love, than upon the justice of God.

But, when we add these different sources of argument together, and consider the import and application of those proofs which they afford; they increase the general stock of rational evidence in favour of the resurrection, and become convincing in every point of view. The arguments of the former chapter prove the resurrection of the righteous, from the certain annihilation of moral evil; and the resurrection of the wicked arises from the justice of God.

The certainty of rewards and punishments ensures to us an hereafter ; these must be administered by the hand of impartial justice ; and this justice ensures to us the continuance of the compounded state of man. This compounded nature can only arise from a restoration of the body ; and since it is included in all of the human race, it is an argument of universal application, and proves that the bodies both of the righteous and the wicked shall rise again from the grave.

The arguments, thus adduced, extend in their different branches to every portion of mankind ; they leave no part unsupported by proof, but fill up every vacuity which the mind perceives. The annihilation of moral evil, and its continuance, both concur to prove the resurrection of the bodies of all ; the *former* those of the righteous, and the latter those of the wicked ; and when joined together, they form an extensive circle, which is completed in all its parts. They extend to the two great divisions of mankind ; and take in the inhabitants both of felicity and of woe. Nothing more can be rationally expected, from the topics of argument which are before us ; and topics more pregnant with evidence, we have no reason, on so abstruse a subject, to expect. The arguments taken in the aggregate, render the great event rather more than morally certain ; they amount to little less than irresistible proof, arising from the sources of *moral certainty*, *analogy*, and *fact* ; and only fall short of begetting that absolute conviction, which nothing but actual demonstration can produce. ✕

SECT. IV.

Observations on several Passages of the Fifteenth Chapter of the First Book of Corinthians, in which Philosophy and Authority are combined and considered together.

THAT the doctrine of the resurrection is a doctrine of the Bible, it would be useless to prove, and ridiculous to deny. To enumerate those places, in which this fact is asserted, would be foreign to my design ; it would remove me from that region in which I have chiefly sought for proof, and oblige me to adduce a train of evidence, on which the Divine authority of the scriptures rests. The chapter, however, which is before us, professedly treats of this important fact ; and the reasonings which St. Paul has used, demand our attention both from the authority on which they are founded, and the masterly arguments which they contain.

St. Paul, in the commencement of his reasonings, adverts to a fact which at that period no one would presume to deny, namely the resurrection of Jesus Christ. *I delivered unto you, (he observes) first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures.* (ver. 3, 4.) From these declarations he proceeds to state the evidences, upon which his assertions were founded ; and appeals to those living witnesses which he thus

enumerates. *After that* (namely the resurrection of which he had spoken in the preceding verses) *he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve ; after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James, then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also.* (ver. 5—8.) Thus we have before us a fact, of a most extraordinary nature, plainly asserted ; and that assertion supported by a cloud of witnesses, who could not possibly be deceived themselves, and who could feel no interest whatever in deceiving others.

The resurrection of Christ, being thus asserted, and proved, by upwards of *two hundred and fifty* living witnesses ; St. Paul proceeds from thence to argue in favour of the doctrine at large, and in the progress of his reasonings applies his arguments to the whole of the human race. Hence he says in verse the twelfth, *Now, if Christ be preached, that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead ? But, if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also is vain. Yea and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God, that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.*

Thus far the argument is strictly conclusive. If the resurrection be impossible in itself, then the resurrection of Christ, which the apostle had asserted

as an indubitable fact, must be an evident falsehood ; and having in that case laid the foundation of his preaching in that event, which has proved a falsehood, *his preaching was vain*, and the faith of those who had received his word with gladness was vain also ; and consequently, the doctrines, which he had taught, were nothing better than an imposition upon mankind. In addition to these circumstances, *we are found false witnesses* (he observes) *before God*. And the reason is evident, because *they had testified* (in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth verses) *of God, that he had raised up Christ* (and that he had been seen by them), *whom it is evident he could not have raised up, if so be that the dead rise not*.

For, if the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised ; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished (verses sixteenth and eighteenth). Such are the inevitable consequences which must ensue, upon a supposition that the resurrection of Christ is false. If that great event be nothing but a forgery, then all those doctrines, which relate to our redemption through Jesus Christ, can be nothing more than mere delusions. Our hope of happiness, through the great atonement, can be nothing more than a visionary deception ; and all experimental religion can be nothing more than an idle dream.

The apostle having anticipated these consequences, proceeds to repeat his original assertion ; and to rely upon those evidences of the fact, which he had already adduced. Having traced the opposite

assertion to its remotest consequences, and pointed out the fatal effects which must ensue, if the resurrection of Christ were admitted to have been a falsehood, and the doctrine itself to be incredible ; St. Paul in verse the twentieth thus proceeds : *But, now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For, as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order : Christ the first fruits ; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming* (verses twentieth and twenty-third).

That Christ is risen from the dead, is a point which will admit of no dispute with any of those who believe the Bible ; and those who do not, would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead. In verse the twenty-first we are assured, that *death came by man* ; it therefore follows, that though man is a compounded being, and though all compounded beings have a tendency to decay, that God must have so far provided for the perpetuity of the human body, that death would have been prevented from taking place, if moral evil had remained totally unknown. Hence then arises the probability, that the tree of life was planted by God to counteract that tendency to dissolution, which seems, in our earthly abode, to be interwoven with all material substances. And hence also the probability, that, when man departed from God, his being denied all access to this tree, exposed him to this dissolution which

resulted from his condition; it is therefore in this view that we may easily conceive the meaning of the apostle, when he tells us that *by man came death*.

It may also be furthermore observed, that the apostle does not attribute the cause of death either to the *soul* or to the *body*, but to the *man*. We have already proved that this word evidently implies the union of two distinct natures; and as *death came by man*, both natures must have concurred to produce it. Both natures were therefore involved in guilt, and both natures became amenable to Divine justice. We may therefore plainly infer from the philosophy of the expression before us, that a resurrection of the body must take place.

The same verse which has told us, that *by man came death*, tells us also that *by man came also the resurrection of the dead*. This part of the expression, without all doubt, alludes to the human nature of Jesus Christ. By his resurrection, the fact itself became visible. The fact overcomes all objections, that can be raised against it. In the person of Christ it stood on the evidence of the senses. His body was *seen*, his voice was *heard*; and those who *held him by the feet and worshipped him* could not be deceived. And, as he was perfect *man*, and his body was perfect *body*, what was possible to him is possible to us as men; and what has actually been fact with his body as to its resurrection, will actually be fact to our bodies. Thus the resurrection came by man, by *the man Christ Jesus, who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh*; and as the resurrec-

tion became visible by him, *who is the first fruits of them that slept*, so his resurrection brought into the world the most permanent evidence ; not merely that the fact was possible and probable, in point of theory, but also that it had been accomplished in point of fact. That therefore, which was accomplished in the person of Christ, can still be accomplished by the same power, in subjects of the same nature. The whole doctrine must therefore evidently apply to our bodies, because nothing but the body of Christ could possibly taste of death. And that the same power, which raised up Christ from the dead, will be exerted in the resurrection of the human race ; is evident from this plain declaration in verse the fifty-second, *the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*.

Here then we have the *fact*, the *power*, and the *promise*. The fact could not deceive, the power cannot be diminished, and the promise cannot lie. Every thing therefore, which *fact*, and *power*, and *promise* can possibly confer, we have before us ; and the evidence becomes conclusive, that the bodies of mankind must awake from the sleep of death. †

In verse the twenty-sixth, we are told, that *the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death*. If death therefore shall be destroyed, his dominion must be at an end. And if his dominion be at an end, his captives must be released ; and if his captives are released, human nature must forsake the grave, and enter upon a state of existence that shall never end. If, in this passage we view death as a

person, the conclusions which I have drawn hold good. But, if we view death as a *mere privation of life*, or a *degraded condition of human nature*, then the destruction of death must be the destruction of that *privation of life*, or of that *degraded condition of human nature*; and where the *privation of life* is destroyed, a restoration to life must necessarily ensue. And whether we view death under the character of a person or not, the conclusion is evident—that the bodies of those who have departed must necessarily rise again.

But, in the midst of these arguments and proofs, *some man*, perhaps *will say, how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?* That every one of those numerical particles, which had at any time been united to a living body, is not necessary to constitute the same body in the resurrection; I have attempted to prove in the sixth chapter of this work. I have contended that *sameness* must continue, in the midst of those changes which our bodies undergo; and that it must consist in something, which shall survive the shocks and changes both of life and death. In the adoption of this sentiment, I feel myself sanctioned by the following language of St. Paul, to whom I am indebted for most of the leading thoughts of that chapter. He observes, in verses the thirty-sixth and thirty-eighth, *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain. But God*

giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

That the body which is sown, is not that body which shall be, is the plain language of verse the thirty-seventh ; we are therefore naturally led to inquire, in what does sameness consist ? The sameness of *figure*, of *magnitude*, and of *weight*, is foreign to the present purpose ; these samenesses were perpetually shifting through every stage of life, without the intermission of a single moment ; and therefore we cannot conceive that these were the objects which the apostle had in view.

There are, however, two points in which this sameness may be considered ; the first is that of the *identity* of the body, and the second is that of the *numerical particles*, of which the body either is or was composed. The former of these must evidently be preserved, because without this it cannot be a resurrection, but must actually be an entirely new creation. And since the former must be preserved, and preserved through eternity, we must conclude that the *sameness of numerical particles* must be the object, which the apostle had in view.

That this was the object, to which he directed our thoughts, is evident from the comparisons which he has introduced, to illustrate his subject. The whole process of vegetation will cast light on the doctrine before us, and communicate ideas which no language can fully express. The dissolution of the parent grain is necessary, to the vegetation of that germ which is lodged within its confines ; but the

old numerical particles are not all called forth, to form that grain which shall be. At the same time, though God giveth to each *a body as it hath pleased him, yet he giveth to every seed his own body.* Thus succession in existence takes place without the destruction of identity, or the introduction of the least confusion among those particles of matter which receive the change ; both in the production of future grain, and in the resurrection of the dead.

But here an objection may be raised, which St. Paul seems to have foreseen, and to have answered by anticipation. It may perhaps be said—"if the body undergo a change analogous to that through which grain passes, that it cannot be the same." But this objection can only arise from our ignorance of body in the abstract. We know not with any degree of certainty, how far change of numerical particles may consist with sameness of body.

We know not with any precision, how far quantity is included in our idea of body ; nor can we determine how far sensible qualities may be removed, while the essence remains entire. Of these variations St. Paul tells us, *That all flesh is not the same flesh ; but there is one kind of flesh of man, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial,* (verses the thirty-ninth and fortieth).

Of eternal things we can have no conception but by comparison ; and that which the apostle has made use of, is sufficiently satisfactory to assure us, that *body* may remain after many astonishing chan-

ges have passed upon it, of which in our present condition we can probably have no conception. That there is a specific difference in the flesh of animals, we cannot doubt. The *flesh of fishes* is totally distinct from that of *men* ; and yet we are fully assured, that the denominating qualities still remain. In what the real difference actually consists, between these two species of animal substances, I take not upon me to determine ; but I learn from the comparison this important lesson, that what changes soever our bodies may undergo, *body*, in all its essential properties, will still continue. And though they may be so far changed, from what they at present are, as *the flesh of fishes* is different from *the flesh of men* ; so much so, that *flesh and blood*, which cannot inherit the kingdom of God, shall be done away, yet that the human body will remain. We see in the comparison, that variations in the constitution are consistent with sameness of nature ; and that the bodies which we have, will still be bodies, whether we consider them as terrestrial or celestial.

From contemplating those animal substances, which are *specifically different*, and yet *essentially the same* ; the apostle proceeds in his comparison by an appeal to the masses of the universe, and the distinct sphere of glory which they exhibit. After having said, that *there are bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial*, he observes, *but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the*

stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead, (verses the fortieth and forty-second).

The different degrees of lustre, with which these heavenly bodies appear, afford strong presumption that they are specifically unlike each other in their internal constitutions, as in their magnitudes and distances from one another ; some of them are luminous, some of them are opaque ; and even those of the solar system, from their differences in their approximation to their common centre, demonstrate that their densities must be various, and that their constitutions must be unlike. Of the fixed stars we know but little ; but, since variety is found in all those works of God which we have any opportunity of contemplating, it is unreasonable to suppose that variety is exclusively confined to the sphere which we inhabit. The productions of distant worlds may be as different from those with which we are acquainted, as the embryo in the womb is from the man in a state of maturity ; or as *the man* in a state of maturity is from man in a future state.

The nature and constitution of the sun must be as distinct from the nature and constitution of those revolving bodies, which he invigorates and warms, as water is from marble ; or as the air we breathe is from the ground on which we tread. The distinctions, which we contemplate, are not founded upon hypothetical possibility, but in many cases they are in actual existence. They differ from one another, in constitution and manner of existence ; and serve to shew us what an infinite variety of

forms omnipotent power is able to produce out of the same materials ; or at least out of materials which only differ in sensible qualities from one another, while they are ultimately resolvable into one common essence.

Whatever differences may be presumed to exist between these heavenly bodies, either in situation, in magnitude, in density, in constitution, or in lustre ; it must not be forgotten that in point of essence they are still the same. They claim their origin in the same common substance ; they still sustain the general appellation of *bodies*, though some of them are more exalted than others ; and though the glory which they emit is different in radiance, as well as differently diffused.

So also is the resurrection of the dead. The same body is capable of undergoing changes, equally surprising, with those variations which we have been contemplating in the bodies of the universe. The ductility of matter, when acted upon by omnipotent power, is so great, that the substance can bend to every thing which its essence does not preclude. And, whether we view it in the distinct species of *flesh*, in bodies celestial, or in bodies terrestrial ; we learn from each subject, to lessen our astonishment at those changes through which our bodies have to pass.

St. Paul having prepared us for the great event, by the enumeration of those facts to which he has appealed ; proceeds to mark out the specific difference between those bodies which we now have, and those which we must have hereafter. *It is sown in*

corruption, it is raised in incorruption, it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory ; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body, (verses the forty-second and forty-fourth).

Through the preceding illustrative comparisons, which St. Paul had introduced, and the masterly application which he has made, we discover, so far as the scantiness of our ideas and the limitation of our capacities will afford, the important changes which await our bodies beyond the grave. The process of vegetation is still in view ; and a state of dissolution seems to be that great alembic, through which our present bodies are to be refined, in order to that perfection which lies in a future state. ✱ To ask why these things are not more clearly revealed, is only to ask why God has not given to us those refined capacities, which are inapplicable to our condition ; and which, if actually bestowed upon us, would make us no longer man. To comprehend, with minute exactness, the subject before us, and to form conceptions which are at once accurate and appropriate, may be reserved for us in that state, which will shortly be our portion, when mortality shall be swallowed up in life. ✱

That our bodies are sown in corruption, is a fact so evident, that it requires no comment. And we may naturally conclude, from the expression of verse the forty-second, that the *incorruption* in which our bodies shall be raised, stands opposed to that corruption in which they are said to be sown.

As therefore *corruption* implies decay, and a total separation of those parts which appear, when deposited in the earth ; so we may naturally conceive, that *incorruption* implies an exemption from that dissolution and decay, which are inseparable from all compounded bodies in our present state of existence. And, as a separation of all the component parts of our bodies, implies either a previous tendency in the parts themselves, or a certain power in some external cause, which communicates its impulses to produce these effects ; so we may naturally infer, either that this internal tendency shall be totally removed, or that the body which shall be raised, will be placed beyond the influence of that power through which a separation of the parts was wrought.

That the body shall be placed beyond the influence of those external causes, which now impel it, has been proved in section the sixth, of the sixth chapter. And, as our future bodies must be material, and as matter in itself can have no tendencies, when placed beyond the reach of all external causes, either to motion or rest ; no given particle, which shall then be placed in our bodies, shall ever remove from its station. And therefore the body, though composed of separable parts, shall be raised and preserved in a state of incorruption.

On these accounts we may easily conceive, how this body, which is *sown in dishonour, shall be raised in glory* ; and why, though *sown in weakness it shall be raised in power*. Its state of incorruption

is a state of glory, to the bodies of the righteous ; and perpetuity of life, implies vigour and power, which never can decay. A removal from the influence of all external causes, must place the particles, of which our bodies shall be composed, beyond the reach of all constraint ; and even give to each of them the power to adhere for ever. Thus *weakness* shall be exchanged for *power*, and *dishonour* for *glory* ; when *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality* : *our corruptible shall be incorruptible, and our mortal shall be immortal*.

That *there is a natural body*, and that *there is a spiritual body*, we are expressly told in verse the forty-fourth ; but in what they shall specifically differ from each other, it is difficult to know. Of a *spiritual body*, in its strictest sense, we can certainly form no accurate, no consistent idea. The two words seem inapplicable to each other, and naturally introduce confusion into our thoughts ; I am therefore inclined to imagine, that the expression is not to be taken in an *absolute*, but only in a *comparative* sense.

That matter can never become spirit, any more than spirit can become matter, will admit of no question ; because according to those notions which we have of these substances, essences can never be exchanged with each other, any more than identity can be supposed to be transferred from one substance to another. A removal of the essence must be a destruction of the being ; and a destruction of the being must inevitably prevent an exchange of nature. In fine, to suppose that matter can become

spirit, or that spirit can become matter, its original nature still remaining, is an evident contradiction, and therefore never can be admitted.

But, though the supposition that matter can become spirit, and that spirit can become matter, involves an evident contradiction ; it is not to be presumed, that we have any real knowledge of the internal essence of either. Many latent qualities may be concealed in both substances, which may unfold themselves in eternity, and point out an approximation to each other, in their sensible qualities, of which at present we can have no conception. And perhaps through those latent qualities, which have hitherto eluded the researches of philosophy, their nominal affinity may be so great, as to leave no distant qualities for finite discrimination.

Whether the nominal essences of substances can be so far changed, as to have no specific quality, through which we shall be able to distinguish the distinct identity of these substances, is a question which we feel ourselves incompetent to decide. It is, however, not improbable, that something analogous thereto will be the case. For, since *we sow not that body which shall be*, the change must be amazingly great ; not only in the modification of its being, but also in its component parts. And therefore, when the resurrection of the body shall take place, all the known properties of matter may retire from our future perceptions, which without doubt, will be considerably changed, and become as invi-

sible and unknown, as those latent properties now are, which are included in both matter and spirit.

The changes, which our *organs* and *powers* of perception must undergo, will without doubt considerably contribute towards the concealment of those sensible qualities, which, I have presumed, will undergo a change. If then our *modes of perception* shall be changed; if our *bodily organs* shall be changed; if our *bodies* themselves shall be changed, as well as all *external objects*, who can say what effects may not be produced? Sensible qualities, without all doubt, will vary; and a variation of sensible qualities in matter, in its approaches towards perfection, must increase its affinity towards spirit, and conduct it to those exalted regions, in which our contemplations are lost.

But, notwithstanding those important changes which our bodies shall undergo; they will without doubt be chiefly confined to those sensible qualities through which the identity of matter is at present known. Amidst these changes of our bodies, the real essence must be preserved entire; because our bodies will remain the same. The qualities may be changed, through the causes which have been mentioned, without affecting the essence of matter, whatever it may be; its refinement may render it so *subtle*, that to touch it will be difficult, and it may, though material, approximate to spirit.

The germ of future life, which we have already considered, dilated in all its parts, and diffused through those spaces which now bound the extremities of our corporeal being, may contain all the

matter which shall survive the grave. If this be admitted, its expansion must make it subtle ; and it is not improbable that, with an eye to this, St. Paul denominated that collection of matter which shall adhere to our souls hereafter, *a spiritual body*, to which it must in this case approach, through the mere *exility* of its nature.

In this view, the expression becomes at once intelligible and sublime. The boldness of the figure obtains sanction, from the subject to which it is applied ; and perhaps the whole compass of language will scarcely have afforded an expression, so concise, so appropriate to the subject, and so sublime. We may therefore conclude with safety, that those bodies which shall be raised from the dust of death, whatever may be the internal constitution of their natures, or the whole mass of component parts ; will be purged from those gross materials which now incorporate with their purer essence. And we may also learn from the language of St. Paul, that through those refinements which shall take place, the infinite distances which now lie between matter and spirit, will be so far overcome as the nature of their distinct essences will admit : and that matter shall be so far changed from its present condition, as to sustain a new appellation.

The view, which St. Paul appears to have taken, seems to have been this. He places our bodies in their present condition, at an inconceivable distance from spirit ; and considers our *future bodies* as formed of refined materials, and standing *between*

these vast extremes. In tracing their resemblance, from their sensible qualities, they evidently appeared to lie at a greater distance from what they are at present, than from pure spirit with which they were compared. And, in consequence of that resemblance, he selected his language, and denominated them *spiritual bodies*.

From fact, the apostle proceeds to order ; and, after having pointed out the changes which shall take place, he states the progress of their accomplishment in the following words. *Howbeit, that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterward that which is spiritual*, (verse the forty-sixth).

✓ We learn from this passage, that the stages through which we pass are all progressive, from the commencement of being to the final consummation of that perfection which our bodies shall attain, when they shall for ever quit mortality, and become comparatively spiritual in their natures. Every stage therefore seems necessary in the grand movement of the whole : they are so many links in the chain of individual being, at once dependent and connective, and necessary in their several stations to the final result of all. The seminal parts are necessary to the embryo ; the embryo to the perfect body ; and the body to that material perfection, which shall be attained in another life. The manner of existence seems as necessary, as the condition in which it must appear in each of the intermediate stages. Life commences with the organic and

vegetative mode ; vegetative life soon loses itself in that which is animal ; animal life subsides at the hour of death, and gives place to that life in which we shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but in which we shall be as the angels of God. Thus, virtual existence shall issue in that which is formal ; formal existence shall commence with an animal body ; and finally issue in that body which St. Paul has denominated spiritual. ✕

Nor can we conceive, that either of these stages or modes of existence can be suspended or changed. The progress is established by laws, which are immutable ; and the order cannot be inverted. The parts in this progressive arrangement, are not only necessary in themselves to the perfection of being ; but are essentially necessary in that particular station in which they are fixed. The establishment is fixed by the laws, which regulate and govern nature ; and these laws must be repealed, before we can suppose the order of this process to be inverted. *That, therefore, is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterward that which is spiritual.*

To this general principle, there seems, however, to be one remarkable exception, which is introduced in verse the fifty-first. *Behold, I show you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed ; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump.*

That the exception to the general principle here spoken of, is an exemption from death, is evident,

from the period to which the passage alludes ;—it is at *the last trump*. And, though the apostle introduces the first person in the plural number ; yet we cannot suppose that as an individual he had any intention to include himself in the number of those, who should be exempted from the stroke of death. When, therefore, he says *we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*, he must be supposed to allude to the body of Christians at large, in all ages of the world ; or perhaps to the human race, whom he considers to be one family ; and the exception must in that, or any view, apply to those who should be alive in the latest ages of the world, “ when the swarm shall issue, and the hive shall burn.”

But, though this remarkable exception shall take place, through which the last generation of the human race shall be exempted from the stroke of death, yet the change itself, which death produces, will not be dispensed with. For, though all *shall not sleep*, yet *all shall be changed*. The change seems absolutely necessary, by what means soever it may be produced, to the production of that *spiritual body*, which we have already considered. ✕ The change therefore, through which these last individuals of mankind may pass, must be, in its nature, equivalent to that which death, by a much slower and more gradual process, shall produce upon the great mass of the human race. ✕ It is a change, through which mortality shall be put off : and through which that extraneous matter, which shall be incorporated with those radical parts which are destined for eternity,

shall be thrown aside; that the *germ* or *radical* parts, separated from the *exuviae*, may be renewed in immortal vigour, to begin a mode of being which shall never end.

That this important change is in itself progressive, according to the *general principle*, it is natural to conceive both from reason and revelation; and the inequalities of those periods, during which the body shall repose in the grave, we have endeavoured to account for, in the third section of the fifth chapter. In that section, I have considered that no given period of duration is absolutely necessary for our continuance in the grave. The periods will be as various as the individuals; and yet the bodies of all will be as ready to quit their gloomy mansion, as soon as the trumpet shall utter its awful sound.

That these sentiments are congenial with those of St. Paul, is evident from verse the *fifty-first*, which we now have under consideration. But inequalities of time do not bound the apostle's views. He proceeds farther, and tells us, that though all shall be changed, all shall not taste of death. It is true, he views it as an astonishing circumstance; and ushers it into view as a deviation from general principles, which we cannot easily comprehend. He tells us that it is a mystery, and as such it evidently appears. At the same time, it is a mystery that he has *shewed us* in point of fact, though the circumstances of its accomplishment be perfectly concealed. We see with sufficient plainness that it must be so; but what

the nature of that process may be, is not clearly revealed.

Of this, however, we are assured, that the change shall be instantaneous, instead of progressive ; and perhaps one short moment will accomplish that work, which on some human bodies had been in a state of progression, for more than five thousand years. *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump*, it shall be effected ; and the change, which death administers through the medium of corruption, shall be accomplished without his aid.

With an eye to the process of nature, this point has been already considered, in the sixth section of the sixth chapter. The length of that period through which these bodies had passed, or in which they had lain in a seminal state, precluded a length of time in their final stage. But, philosophy could only assure us, that this stage must necessarily be short. The change which appeared absolutely necessary, required a period of duration, in order to its completion ; and as nothing but the common process appeared necessary to its completion, philosophy directed our attention to the grave. St. Paul, however, instructed in a better school, has penetrated the cloud which hovered over our researches, and told us in a few words how the mighty work shall be performed. He has revealed to us that secret, which God had revealed to him ; and told us that important mystery which must otherwise have been concealed. It is therefore from him we

learn, that *we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*, (verse the fifty-second).

Hence then we learn from the verse last quoted, that in one awful moment, the *sound of the trumpet, the change of the living, and the resurrection of the dead* to a state of incorruptibility, shall take place. Human nature must then undergo its final renovation, and enter upon the commencement of that state of existence, which shall know nothing either of intermission, of change, or of termination. Of those bodies, which had mouldered in the grave, and passed through the process of corruption; and those which had sustained the changes which supplanted death, no difference will probably hereafter remain. In both cases, mortality is swallowed up of life; and every vestige of corruption is done away. No distinction can therefore remain between those bodies, which are totally delivered from its influence; and those which are exempted from it by passing through a mysterious change. In both cases, the germ of the future body must be preserved from destruction; and whether it collect around it any new particles or not, it will, without all doubt, put forth those latent powers which now are in an embryo state; while it will be dilated through all its parts, and be assimilated to that mode of existence, which spiritual substances enjoy.

But, amidst these changes which our bodies will sustain, there is one of peculiar import, which St.

Paul has noticed in verse the fiftieth, in these words, *Now this I say unto you, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*

We have, perhaps, included in this expression, the most astonishing alteration in the human body, that we can possibly conceive. It includes a change, which removes those parts that are necessary to our present state of existence; and concurs to place our bodies in that astonishing light, which the preceding paragraphs have been written to elucidate and confirm.

That *the dead shall be raised incorruptible*, is the plain language of the fifty-second verse; and it is evident that this verse must refer to the body; because nothing can be raised but that which had been previously sown; and that which had been sown could include nothing but the material part. If then the body shall rise again, and those of the righteous shall enter into the joy of their Lord; and if *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*; the consequence is inevitable, that *flesh and blood can form no part of those bodies which shall survive the grave.*

Of those human bodies, which shall be destitute of flesh and blood, we can form no adequate idea. The bones, were they to remain, would not be a human body; they would form but an unpleasant spectacle; and carry with them evident marks of mortality; if they were endued with life.

But, as flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor corruption inherit incorruption;

we have no more reason to suppose that the bones which we possess will survive the grave, than we have to expect that our future bodies will be formed of flesh and blood. The change must therefore be radical, throughout our present system ; whether it be effected by death, or by that instantaneous revolution, which shall be accomplished without his delegated power. X

The associating and dispersing atoms, which constitute our flesh and blood, must on this account be considered as superfluous matter ; when we have our eye fixed on that body which shall live, when death shall be destroyed. These atoms, without all doubt, are essentially necessary to our present mode of existence, and we can no more conceive how our bodies can exist, as bodies without flesh and blood, than we can conceive how matter can exist without gravitation, or without any of its sensible qualities.

But, since our bodies must survive the ravages of death, and exist in a state of separation from flesh and blood, we cannot avoid concluding, that *flesh and blood* are not necessary to the existence of the body in the abstract. Body, therefore, must even now in its refined and philosophical sense, consist in something different from *flesh and blood*. That which is necessary to the existence of any being, never can be removed while that being remains.

But, since identity cannot be transferred, and since a period will arrive when those bodies, which we now have, shall be raised again and continue, in point of identity, the same for ever, without the assistance of flesh and blood ; the identity of our

bodies must now consist in something, with which flesh and blood have only a distant connection.

Whatever is necessary to the abstract existence of the same body under the same circumstances for ever. The reverse would involve some palpable contradictions. Since, therefore, a period will arrive, when those bodies which we now have, shall commence and continue a state of existence, in a region where flesh and blood cannot enter ; the conclusion is certain, that flesh and blood can form no part of our present bodies, when we abstract them from the local circumstances of *time*, and *place*, and *modification* of substance.

In our present condition and situation, flesh and blood form a necessary part of our bodies ; they form indeed the most essential part of the concrete, whether we look upon that concrete with an eye either to magnitude or utility. And indeed, were we to fix our stand within the circle of time, and cast no look beyond the grave ; we can form no other conception of flesh and blood, than that they are essential parts of our bodies, and therefore inseparable from them ; and that the loss of flesh and blood must necessarily be the total loss of their being.

But, when we step beyond the boundaries of time, and take our stand in eternity ; when we take with us the declarations of the apostle, that *the dead shall be raised incorruptible*, and that *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God* ; the theory of our last paragraph stands inverted, and we form new opinions of *body*, and of *flesh* and *blood*.

And, when to this we add, that our bodies shall exist hereafter in a state of *incorruption*, in *power*, in *glory*, and even become comparatively spiritual ; instead of considering flesh and blood in the character of *essential parts*, we can only view them as necessary appendages of being, confined to those local abodes which they have forsaken for ever.

As, therefore, *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*, nor *corruption inherit incorruption* ; those corruptible and visible parts, which we behold, must disappear, either through the process of the grave, or of that change which shall supersede its necessity. ✕ The real body, which shall be hereafter, must therefore at present be concealed, beneath those exuviæ which shall be done away in death. It seems reserved for a future state of existence ; while those parts which will appear as appendages from eternity, when we look back on time, seem destined to perform the functions of the present life. †

In what then can we presume the identity of our future, as well as present, bodies to be lodged, but in that radical stamen, or germ, which we have already considered and supposed ? It is a principle, which will admit of no dispute—*that sameness can never be transferred* ; it is equally certain, *that our bodies shall rise again* ; and it is equally certain, *that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*. The final consequence is, therefore, certain also, that when we view our bodies in eternity, and look back on the stations which they occupied, and the materials with which they were incorporated ;

we shall be able to distinguish them from those extraneous particles, with which they were united ; and from this view we can now conclude, that flesh and blood can no more form any real part of our bodies, in the abstract, than they can inherit the kingdom of God.

The final result of the preceding reasoning, which St. Paul has adduced in favour of the resurrection, and of those changes through which our bodies must pass, in order to the attainment of that felicity and perfection which are placed beyond the reach of death ; is summed up in verse the fifty-third. In this verse he has assured us, that *this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

In this point of immortality all those changes, which we have been contemplating, happily meet together ; and those private dissertations, which the great apostle had introduced in the intermediate stages of his arguments and reasonings, were all conducive to this general and important fact. The intervening obstacles have been removed, by an appeal to that power which is infinite, or obviated by a happy anticipation. The process of nature has taught us, that difficulties are no arguments against certainty ; and that the wonders which we expect, are not greater than those which we have already seen.

That this corruption should put on incorruption, St. Paul had told us in effect in many preceding parts of this chapter ; and many of his observations tended to shew, how the great event should be

brought to pass. But, in this place, his sentiments are delivered in express and unequivocal terms. The whole passage must necessarily apply to the body, because that alone is mortal, of all that belongs to man. If then this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, the fact itself is placed beyond all dispute, whether the process of its accomplishment be comprehensible or not. It was sufficient to shew, that the fact itself contained nothing within it repugnant either to philosophy or reason; but the arguments adduced have gone much further; they have proved a congeniality with the established principles of both, and proceeded so far as to convince the unprejudiced part of mankind, that they have no reason to imagine it a *thing incredible that God should raise the dead*.

The credibility of an abstruse fact, adds dignity to that authority, which pronounces it certain; without increasing the authenticity of any evidence which may be deemed divine. Authority which is divine, needs no foreign support; it stands on its own intrinsic excellence, and commands assent; and in this view, the apparent incredibility of the fact, is no argument against the certainty of it, while we are *assured* that the authority is from God. But the incredibility of the fact, may render the authority questionable; and in proportion as the persuasion of its incredibility gains strength in the mind, these doubts will increase, because nothing that includes a contradiction can possibly come

from God. The arguments, therefore, which St. Paul condescended to use in confirmation of the credibility of that fact, which in point of certainty he referred to divine power, added dignity to that authority, by which he spoke. The same illustrations which tended to render the fact itself credible, tended also to remove all suspicions from that authority, on which the certainty of the fact ultimately stood. Hence then, rational and philosophical arguments, when applied to subjects of Divine revelation, though they cannot add to the authenticity of the fact, yet tend to remove all suspicions from that authority, on which revelation obtains our assent.

Thus far the elucidative arguments and illustrative examples which have been adduced, are of importance to those whose belief is unshaken in the revelation which we have from God. But, when from them we turn to those who deny all authority, and place their only evidences of certainty, in the credibility and probability of the fact itself, every argument which can remove even a shadow of a doubt, must be of the last importance. The appeals, which St. Paul has made to the process of vegetation, to the different species of flesh, and the various glories which the heavenly bodies exhibit to our senses ; are proofs, that, to convince the sadducean generations of men, in all the ages of the world, was one object which he had in view. When, therefore, we join these two parts of his method together, and combine *argument* with *authority* ; when we consider the former, as applying to those who deny the

resurrection, and the latter to those who admit it; and when to this we add the dignity which *that* confers on *this*, the whole forms a system of evidence, in which philosophy and authority combine to produce conviction.

From the positive declaration of verse the fifty-third, which we have been considering, the same inspired author proceeds, in verse the fifty-fourth, to tell us what those immediate effects are, which shall succeed the great events which he had previously described. *So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*

The saying that is written, was delivered in prophecy more than seven hundred and fifty years, prior to this appeal which the apostle makes. It may be found in *Isaiah, the twenty-fifth and eighth*; and to be convinced that it alluded to the resurrection of the body from the grave, we need only advert to the application of it, which St. Paul has made. The words of Isaiah are, *He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth, for the Lord hath spoken it.*

It is, however, but of little consequence to us, whether these words which *predict the destruction of death*, originated with Isaiah or St. Paul. We are more deeply interested in the issue than the ori-

gin; and it is to *that* we must turn our thoughts. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death*; and the victory which shall be obtained over this gloomy conqueror, must finally liberate the human race. The death of the captor must manumit the captives, and set the prisoners free. ✕ Death, when destroyed, can be followed by no successor. The power will admit of no delegation; when once subdued, it is for ever lost; and those who shall be rescued from his gloomy prison can die no more. ✕

It is of no consequence to the argument which St. Paul has used, whether we view death personified in the character of a *tyrant*, as a *positive power*, or as the mere *negation of life*. In either view, the result is conspicuous, and we are conducted to a point, in which these different views must meet at last. If death be a *tyrant*, he must be subdued. If death be a *positive power*, a victory must be obtained over it. And if death be nothing more than the mere *negation of life*, it must be overcome. In either, the conquest of death is certain; and the point in which these different views will meet at last, must be the final restoration of human nature from the tomb to life.

The last of these views, in which we have just contemplated death, appears to be that which best accords with our philosophical inquiries, and our rational conceptions; and, as a mere negation of life and power, it seems most natural to consider death.

As a *person*, he can only have a poetical existence, which may furnish an allusion, or give perfection to a rhetorical figure. Yet, if we view him

even in this capacity, he must be slain. Under the idea of *positive power*, it is impossible that we can have any accurate conceptions of death. A power, which is positive, must exist before it can produce any effects; otherwise the effect must be coæval with its cause, which is at once impossible and absurd. And, as all causes must exist prior to their effects, if death be a positive power, it can have no necessary connection with those effects which are presumed to result from it. And if there can be no necessary connection between death and those effects which result from it, death may exist though nothing die, which is an absurdity that cannot well be exceeded. I think, therefore, that the conclusion is certain, that death cannot be *positive power*. As, therefore, death cannot be *personal*, nor be justly contemplated under the idea of *positive power*; it can be seen in no other light than that of the negation of life.

If death be the *negation of life*, and be destroyed, the *negation of life* must be done away; and if the negation of life be done away, life must be restored, and the body must rise again. If the negation of life be done away, it can only be done away from those who are, or who shall be, in a state of actual death; because it is in these regions alone, that the negation of life resides. And, if from them who are in a state of actual death, the negation of life shall be removed, as there can be no medium between positive existence and the negation of life, nothing appears which can prevent the resurrection of the dead.

That death, whatever may be its nature, shall be

destroyed, is the plain language of scripture; (verse the twenty-sixth,) and that it shall be swallowed up in victory, is the plain language of verse the fifty-fourth. As, then, the premises are unquestionable, and the adductions which have been made are too evident to be denied; we are led by guides which will not deceive us, to the same common conclusion which we have repeatedly drawn—that those who sleep in the dust of the earth must awake to immortal life.

That the conquest which death obtains, and shall continue to obtain, till the final consummation of all things, could only apply to the material part of man, is too obvious to require a moment's proof. The immaterial part of man, being spiritual in its nature, is placed beyond the reach of death. The removal of death can therefore only apply to the body, because it is over this alone that death extends its sway. The victory which shall be obtained over death, must be a removal of that absence of life, under which the human body lies; the removal must issue in the reverse; the reverse is life; and therefore the body must live again.

As the body must rise again, and join its immaterial partner, both, in a state of indissoluble union, must enter into a state either of punishments or rewards which must continue for ever. ✕ It is the dread of future punishment, arising from a consciousness of guilt, that arms death with all its terrors, and makes it an awful thing to die. ✕ Hence says the apostle, *the sting of death is sin, and the*

strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

* The Redeemer of the world through the efficacy of his atonement, is the foundation of all our hopes. It is through his merit that the sting of death is drawn; and the strength of sin is obviated, by the expiation which he has made. Through an interest in him, we contemplate the resurrection of our bodies from the grave with calmness and tranquillity, as an object of our wishes rather than of our fears. Though the grave is a gloomy passage, it is but a subterraneous road to bliss. It is with an eye to that glory which shall be revealed hereafter, that St. Paul concludes the chapter which we have in part considered, with the wholesome and important advice, which he has seriously addressed to all true believers: *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

FINIS.

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